HOW TO AVOID ERRORS IN ENGLISH

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INTRODUCTION

This book is intended to benefit Indian students of English and others desirous to speak and write English correctly. There are several authoritative books on the subject written by experts. In these, however, only occasional reference is made to errors usually committed by Indians. Fowler's *Modern English Usage* and *King's English* deal exclusively with the blunders committed by educated Englishmen, British journalists, politicians and scholars. The need of a book with special reference to Indian English is therefore imperative, and the present volume devotes a special chapter under the heading of "Indianisms" to the treatment of typical blunders made by Indians in speaking and writing English. With this end in view the authors have taken pains to select for illustration passages from Indian journals, speeches and writings by eminent Indian speakers and writers. The examples given in the succeeding chapters are also borrowed from Indian sources. And it will be noted that the illustrations are not fictitious; they are the outcome of the author's familiarity with expressions current among educated Indians.

The authors own their deficiencies in treating of the most ticklish and unreliable subject of pronunciation, a field which even European angels of experts fear to tread. In dealing with this subject the authors have preferred to confine themselves to such blunders as Indian students are apt to make. They have also ventured to lay down rules though

they may not be universally reliable and applicable for the guidance of students and others interested in the correct pronunciation of English words. The authors feel confident that this method of treatment of pronunciation will be helpful also to their readers as it has considerably benefited most of their own students. And in view of the importance of the subject they would like to urge upon all teachers of English the need of starting teaching correct pronunciation even in the early stages of instruction.

Grammar

The Grammar of the English language was once treated as a subject consisting of a body of inexorable laws and rigid rules. It had been fashioned on the model of the Grammars of Latin and Greek. English Grammar is no longer rigid. It tends to grow in conformity with changing usages. "It's me," and "who do you want to see" are colloquial expressions but they have won recognition by Grammar. Grammar will thus be found changing and growing *pari passu* with Idiom.

More than 250 examples of grammatical inaccuracies and blunders have been provided under different heads in Chapter IV of this volume and corrected with reasons. The correction of a few examples, however, has not been accounted for, being self-explanatory; only the correct forms have been given at the end within brackets.

The chapter dealing with lapses in Grammar contains 34 sections, each of which treats of an important aspect of it. The authors trust they will

not be ringing the changes in vain on the fact that the examples given under each head are not imaginary but have been borrowed from daily conversations and writings. The sources have not been named in some instances by way of courtesy. It will therefore be found that the grammatical pitfalls pointed out in the chapter on Grammar will help our readers to avoid them.

Idiom

The idioms or phrase-collocations given as examples of wrong usage in Chapter V are most of them, if not all, current among educated Indian speakers and writers. A few of them, however, will be found to be the common features of the speeches and writings of Europeans as well. In the chapter on Idiom or usage as well as in that on Indianisms special attention has been paid to such of the expressions as are in vogue among educated Indians. It has also been trotted out that many educated Europeans are not free from some of the lapses to which educated Indians are mostly liable; the use of unattached participles, wrong word-collocations, etc., but in the use of idioms they are not caught tripping so badly or so often as educated Indians are. Idiom or correct usage on which alone Grammar is based ought to receive in schools greater attention than is actually paid to it at present. The chapters on Idiom and Indianisms contain between them more than two hundred examples of lapses to which Indians are mostly subject, and they deserve especial attention and study.

Pronunciation

A tendency to mispronounce English words is common to Europeans and educated Indians. The former blunder owing to difference of local peculiarities of pronunciation, while the latter make mistakes through ignorance. A formulation of rules, such as has been attempted, is not always a safe guide to correct pronunciation. Whenever one feels a difficulty about the correct pronunciation of an English word, one will do well to refer to a dictionary. There has however been found considerable improvement in pronunciation among educated Indian speakers, perhaps as the result of their strong inclination to learn correct pronunciation or closer touch with educated Englishmen. This is an achievement on which every educated Indian speaker who is good at pronunciation is entitled to congratulate himself.

Choice of Words

This is a very important feature of the book. Educated Indians are often found to blunder in the choice of appropriate words out of pairs of synonyms. The nice distinctions between pairs of synonyms have been pointed out, and in the selection of these great care has been taken to treat of such as present some difficulty. Many educated Indians are heard to experience some difficulty in the correct use of the verbs, 'Go' and 'Come'. Faulty constructions like 'She asked me *to come* to her' and 'I asked her to go to me' are vernacular idioms but unidiomatic in English. There are two alternatives to choose between: we should not say, 'In a war the only alternative is success and defeat';

the alternatives are success or defeat. Replace *and* in the former example by *or* and *or* in the latter by *and*. The expression, rather the Indianism, 'There is no other go' in the sense of 'There is no other alternative' is wrong for the colloquial 'it's no go.'

It was pointed out at the beginning that the English language is fast changing and what were once regarded as standard idioms have become either colloquialisms and slang. Colloquialisms are used to give piquancy to expression of ideas but their use is restricted to conversation, correspondence, and fiction; while *slang* is contemptible and is therefore best avoided in refined writing or cultured speech. Such points have been emphasised in the body of the book whenever opportunity has offered. And it is hoped that the examples of lapses in Grammar and Idiom found in the book with adequate explanations will benefit the reader to a considerable extent. The authors therefore feel confident that their labours in this direction will be widely appreciated, as they have spared no pains in bringing their long experience as teachers, and their knowledge of the subject to bear upon the work. Finally, the authors feel conscious that they may be at times open to the charge of reiteration of facts, but they have only to defend themselves by stating that they have had recourse to repetition with a view to emphasising such of the facts as they considered worthy of especial attention. As it is feared that there will be no end to multiplying examples of faulty English, it is thought desirable at least in the interest of brevity to bring the chapter to a close.

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Chapter I

TYPES OF ENGLISH

'Manners maketh man' is an old saying. Good manners are the manners not of a particular community, but of all cultured people in general. It is the privilege of any refined society so to regulate its manners and tastes as to entitle every phase of its life to public regard and esteem.

The style of dressing changes from time to time; we do not dress as our forefathers did. The words and expressions that were in vogue in the past have many of them become archaic. What was once literary or Standard English has become either slang or colloquial.

It will thus be seen that there are three principal kinds of English usage—vulgarisms, colloquialisms, and Standard English. It has already been pointed out that what was once a vulgarism has in time developed into a colloquialism or an established usage. And it may be stated with an equal amount of precision that what was once an established usage has in course of time degenerated into a colloquial or slang expression.

Dr. Campbell lays down three essential conditions to determine the character of an expression. According to him, each expression of Standard English must possess three characteristics: (1) that it should be used by speakers and writers of repute; (2) that it should not be local but national;

and (3) that it should be in present use. So, in order to determine whether an expression is good Standard English or not, one should put it to Dr. Campbell's test; if it stands the test, it is an established idiom; if it does not, it must be either colloquial or slang.

The following are examples of slang words and expressions:—to peter out, to plank down money, shirty (angry), a deal (a great deal), boss (master), to feel queer, beastly drunk or wet, brainy, to raise the wind, a bit on, to kick the bucket, all serene (all right), all over the shop, to cut no ice (to effect little), a swot (one who works hard at books), to run the show (to manage an affair), pal (friend), a pot of money (a large sum), a funk (a coward), and to blue money (to spend money riotously). "Also ran" is a slang expression which means person or persons that failed to win distinction. Slang expressions are best avoided in public speaking or serious writing.

Colloquialisms

The intermediate stage through which a slang expression passes before attaining the status of Standard English is the colloquial, which is more dignified than the slangy. Colloquialisms are current in daily conversation, journalism, and fiction. They are, however, out of place in good composition.

The following are some examples of colloquialisms:—

Chap, to go and do (to be so foolish as to do),

here's a go, it's no go, on the go, to kick up a row, it's me, mighty fine, varsity, to turn down a proposition, cheeky, in the know, to leave it at that, to want badly, a tall order, a power of work, so sorry, so that's that, so so (his condition is so so).

To the above may be added some more examples, such as, to the fore, it is plenty large, to down an aeroplane, down on the nail, for ages (for a long time), to be in a fix, to fix up (to arrange, to organise), I kind of expected it, these kind of men, bike.

Chapter II

STANDARD ENGLISH

Idiom is the method of expression characteristic of or peculiar to a language. An idiom in English is a form of expression which has established itself in use among a majority of well educated Englishmen. It is therefore identical with racy, natural or unaffected English.

Idiom therefore restricts us to certain peculiar forms of expression as distinguished from or contrasted with others, and they are known as idiomatic phrases or phraseological expressions. Idiom is of two kinds—grammatical and phraseological. Grammatical idiom is governed by rules of grammar and will not allow of violation. Phraseological idiom, which depends on usage, can be mastered only by hearing distinguished speakers, and by studying famous writers.

English idiom is rigid and will not admit of substitution or alteration lest its effect should be spoilt altogether. It requires that we should say 'he laughed in his sleeve' and not 'in his sleeves' or 'within his sleeve'. 'To pick a quarrel with one' is correct. One does not 'pocket up' an insult, but 'pockets' it. We say, the manager found fault with his clerk. The idiomatic collocation 'found fault with' should not be disturbed; we should not substitute *in* for *with*. We however say, 'The manager found a fault *in* his clerk.' We say correctly, 'He

killed two birds with one stone,' when he gained two objects at once, and the phrase 'with one stone' should not be replaced, or paraphrased. For instance, the verb, 'throw' in 'to throw dust in one's eyes should not be replaced by 'put', though they are synonyms. Likewise, the idiomatic collocations, "to earn one's livelihood", "many a time and oft", should not be replaced by "to eke out one's livelihood" and "many a time and often". The above are examples of phraseological idioms.

It has been stated that whatever expression is subject to the rules of Grammar is a grammatical idiom. There are, however, some expressions, which in the eye of grammar are incorrect, but have attained the rank of established usage. For example, 'from frying pan into the fire', is grammatically unexceptionable, but idiomatically wrong, the correct expression being "out of the frying pan into the fire". Again, 'to go to ruins' is incorrect for 'to go to ruin', but we correctly say, the city is in ruins. The verb *do* in 'How do you do? cannot admit of a change in the tense, and we should not say, 'how are you doing?' The following expressions pass muster, though grammatically exceptionable:—It's me, who do you mean? Whom do men say that I am? The following are faulty:—I am none the better for taking your advice, an useful book, I cannot help but laugh, to slowly trace the forest's shady scene, and this is one of the most interesting books that has ever been written. They are grammatical aberrations.

The sentence, 'The boy has no brain or brains', is correct, but the plural 'brains' is idiomatic in

'to cudgel one's brains'. The verbs, enjoy, perjure, disport, are reflexive, and the verb *doubt* takes after it *whether* in assertions and *that* in negative statements and interrogations: 'I doubt *whether* you are right'; but 'I do not doubt *that* you are right' and 'do I doubt *that* you are right?' The collocation 'two years and a half' is preferable to 'two and a half years'. The phrase *rather than* connects two infinitives after 'prefer': I prefer to die rather than suffer. 'I should like' is more idiomatic than 'I would like' and the latter is colloquial, though grammatically faulty.

It is worth while reading the book is correct, but 'the book is worth while reading' is grammatically absurd. 'What is needed are a few details' is grammatically wrong, and the verb *are* requires to be replaced by *is*, as the verb agrees with the subject and not the complement in number. There are certain words which are followed by the gerund and not the infinitive: he succeeded in *capturing* the town, and not 'to capture'; he is *forbidden to go* but prevented from *going;* the speaker is *equal to facing* any political problem (not 'to face'). 'I am intent on going' and not 'I am intent to go.' On the other hand, 'I see no reason to interfere' is idiomatic, but 'for interfering' is wrong. 'Being an eminent speaker, we wished to hear him' contains an unattached participle; insert 'he' before *being*.

Chapter III

PURISTS AND STANDARD ENGLISH

The purity and virility of Standard English are marred by the slang and colloquial expressions. Consequently there has set in a deterioration in the standard of speaking and writing, which has corrupted English literature a great deal. And the corruption has been hastened and aggravated by the great influx of words due to the increasing intercourse, social and economic, between the English and other nations of the world. Hence arises the need of an organised campaign against loose and careless expression.

Of late, however, there has been a marked tendency among English writers and stylists to use Saxon words whenever possible, to the exclusion of the Romance or classical. Ever and anon, writers of note have made a dead set at the introduction of classical words into English. De Quincy remarks that the structural qualities of English have been considerably weakened by the large influx of the classical element. The attack was carried further by others who severely discounted the value of foreign words in English literature. Whether absolute avoidance of the foreign element would conduce to the development of a perfect language or literature, it is not our province to discuss.

A. The aim of a good speaker or writer should be so to choose his words or expression as to make

others understand them without needless effort or waste of time. The following rules are recommended by the authors of *King's English* for the guidance of those who aim at clearness and correctness of expression:—

1. Prefer the familiar word to the far-fetched.
2. Prefer the concrete word to the abstract.
3. Prefer the single word to the circumlocution or the round-about expression.
4. Prefer the Saxon word to the Romance.

The following are examples cited from the same source to illustrate violations of the above rules:—

(*a*) Continual vigilance is imperative on the public to ensure .... (The people must ever be on the watch ....).

(*b*) Inaccuracies were *in many cases* due to cramped methods of writing (often).

(*c*) On the Berlin Bourse today the prospect of a general strike was *envisaged* (faced).

(*d*) *Despite the unfavourable climatic conditions*........................ (Bad as the weather has been........................).

(*e*) He often *indulges in terminological inexactitudes* (Tells lies).

B. There are certain words in idiomatic phrases which should not be taken out of their setting and used separately. The position of words in collocations should not be altered. It is against usage to

say 'Kin and kith' for 'Kith and kin'; 'branch and root' for the idiomatic 'root and branch', 'from foot to head' for 'from head to foot'; 'wrong or right' for 'right or wrong'. Nor should we replace words in idiomatic collocations by others of the same sense:—'likes and dislikes' by 'likings and dislikings'; 'cheek by jowl' by 'cheek by jaw'; 'part and parcel' by 'part and portion'; 'to keep watch and ward' by 'to keep watch and guard.' Similarly, we should not say or write 'to look for a needle in a bundle of hay for the idiomatic 'to look for a needle in a bottle of hay'; 'on penalty of death' for 'on pain of death'; 'without failure' for 'without fail'.

In idiomatic phrases, right words should be put in right places as for example:—*from time immemorial* and not *from immemorial time; at death's door* and not *at the door of death; at one's wit's end* and not *at the end of one's wit; to be at one's finger-tips or ends* and not *to be at the tips or ends of one's fingers.*

In each of the following collocations consisting of a noun and an adjective, the latter is placed after the former in spite of the general rule of grammar in regard to the relative position of a noun and an adjective. The following are examples: —body politic, blood royal, heir apparent, generations unborn, point-blank, Viceroy designate, letters patent, malice prepense, sum-total, God Almighty, things temporal, Lords paramount, Lords spiritual and temporal.

Chapter IV

LAPSES IN GRAMMAR WITH SUGGESTIONS AND REASONS FOR CORRECTION

1. *Wrong Plurals and Plural Forms of Nouns*:
   - (*a*) *Crowds after crowds* poured in to see the great man (crowd after crowd).
   - (*b*) The barrister paid his *address* to his landlord's daughter (addresses).
   - (*c*) The people of Bengal are in *a great strait* for food (great straits).
   - (*d*) Have you male *issues?* (issue = child or children).
   - (*e*) The man was rewarded according to his *desert* (deserts).
   - (*f*) Admission to the lecture hall will be by *tickets* (ticket = the system of admission is meant and not the tickets issued).
   - (*g*) The *emolument* of elementary teachers *was* very low (emoluments were).
   - (*h*) These men were awaiting *a better day* to make up their losses (better days).
   - (*i*) Only a few people command *multitudes* and the latter simply obey them (multitude).
   - (*j*) When an air raid occurred in Madras, the A.R.P. men did *yeomen's* service (yeoman's or yeoman).

(*k*) Twelve times six *are* seventy-two (six= number 6. It is the subject and takes a singular verb).

Note:—The nouns *issue*, *furniture*, *aircraft*, *salmon*, *scenery*, *machinery*, etc., have no plural forms. We say, the Miss Ramanathans or the Misses Ramanathan have come, and the former expression is more current. The bad news from all sides *have* unhinged his mind (The noun 'news' is treated as singular; correct 'have' to 'has').

2. *Wrong Case-formations and Confusion of Cases*:

The following are examples :—

(*a*) Let him be *whom* he is; it does not matter to me (who).

(*b*) It's *me* (I).

(*c*) I know the lady to be *she* whom we wanted to see the other day (*her*).

(*d*) You have no clue to *whom* Evans was or as to what he was to have been asked (*who*).

(*e*) If any must leave the party, let it not be *we* (us).

(*f*) I hope you will not object to *him* going (*his*).

(*g*) This book is not mine; it is somebody's else (somebodyelse's).

(*h*) I have no objection to you going (to your going).

Note :—In correcting the errors in the above the following principles must be borne in mind; (1) the case of the noun or pronoun used as the complement of the verb must agree with that of the subject logical or grammatical before it; (2) the *else* compounds made up of *else* and some pronouns form the possessive by adding *s* to *else* : Everybodyelse's, nobodyelse's, everyoneelse's and so on; (3) the pronoun in the clause *whom Evans was* is the complement of the verb and the whole clause is governed by the proposition *to* : the accusative *whom* must be replaced by *who;* (4) the possessive of compound nouns such as Governor-General, Commander-in-Chief, father-in-law, etc., is formed by adding the apostrophe and *s* to the last word : Commander-in-Chief's, father-in-law's. Contrast this with the formation of the plural : Commanders-in-Chief, Governors-General, etc. The teacher must listen to the pupils reading (pupils').

3. *Confusion in the Use of Abstract and Concrete Nouns* :

(*a*) To exercise the pupil in thinking out fresh matter is to divert his energies from practice in language to *exercises* in thought (exercise).

(*b*) People generally prefer *a* crossing where there is not *crossing*. (Remove the *a* before the abstract noun and insert *a* after *not* before the concrete noun *crossing*.)

(*c*) Necessity knows no *laws* (law). The word law is used in the abstract sense and it takes no plural form.

Note :—The absence of his relations on the occasion was *his sorrow* (the cause of his sorrow).

Rama is his father's *pride* and Mr. Satyamurthy was the *envy* of his political rivals. The boy's safe return was the *joy* of his parents. The words in italics are in concrete sense.

4. *The Wrong Use of Possessive Pronouns in Idiomatic Collocations* :

(*a*) You should bear in *your* mind the advice given by your teacher (bear in mind).

(*b*) The stock of unsold books remaining *on my hands* will, I hope, be sold out next year. The grammatical collocation in *on hand;* replace 'on my hands' by 'on hand' or 'with me'.

(*c*) Gokhale started *his* life as a teacher of youth (remove *his*).

(*d*) The law was observed *both in its letter and its spirit* (replace the italicised phrase by *both in letter and in spirit*).

(*e*) He is over *his* head and ears in debt (remove 'his').

(*f*) He took me by *my* hand (*the*).

5. *Wrong Substitution of the Definite Article for the Possessive Pronoun* :

(*a*) I put him on *the* mettle (his)

(*b*) He is on *the* last legs (his).

(*c*) He took it into *the* head that I had gone to him for a favour (his),

but, (*d*) The cup of iniquity if full to *its* brim (the).

6. *Wrong Use and Omission of the Articles*:

(*a*) The father *sent a word* to his son to go and see him (sent word).

(*b*) The headmaster was *given free hand* in the management of the school (a free hand).

(*c*) The matter took *the* air and spread to every nook and corner of the country (took air).

(*d*) Mr. Krishnaswami is no less a skilled artist than his brother Govind. The sentence when rearranged becomes, Mr. Krishnaswami is an artist—no (by no means) less skilled than his brother Govind. Replace 'no less a skilled artist' by 'no less skilled an artist' or 'a no less skilled artist'.

(*e*) The work took up much of my time *from the first to the last* (from first to last).

(*f*) Books are sold *by the hundred thousands* (by the hundred thousand or by hundreds of thousands).

(*g*) The house is in *possession of his brother* (in the possession of his brother). We may also say 'his brother is in possession of the house'.

In the possession of = owned by. In possession of = the owner of.

(*h*) After all, the Indian settlers are not demanding very much in seeking a fair share in the deserts of an endeavour to which they have contributed in *no small a measure* (in no small measure). No small = Not a small; hence *a* is superfluous.

7. *Lapses in the Use of Pronouns*:

(*a*) *Whoever* told you so? *Whatever* are you doing? (who ever, what ever).

The above pronouns are by some incorrectly called compound interrogative pronouns. They must be written separately as *who ever* and *what ever.*

Who ever? = Who on earth? What ever? = What on earth?

(*b*) These two conditions may be distinguished from *one another* in the following way. Replace *one another* by *each other*. The collocation *each other* is used of two persons or things, and *one another*, of more than two.

(*c*) *Though whatever* may happen, we are safe (Remove *though*).

Whatever = Though anything; hence *though* is out of place.

(*d*) Resort to the mother-tongue is permitted to whatever extent deemed necessary. Whatever = Any that; it is termed in grammar a compound relative as it con-

tains the relative *that* and the antecedent *any*. *Whatever extent* = any extent that. It requires a predicate; hence insert *is* after *extent*.

(*e*) The word is one of those that *has* degenerated to slang after being in perfectly good use. The relative pronoun *that* has for its antecedent *those* and not *one;* it should be of the same number as its antecedent, *i.e.*, plural. Correct *has* to *have*.

(*f*) Who is here so vile *that* will not love his country? The wrong construction is due to a confusion between *that* as a relative pronoun and *that* as a conjunction.

The clause 'that will not love his country' is not an adjective clause but an adverbial one of consequence or result. Insert *he* for the subject after *that*, which is a conjunction.

(g) The officers are there to safeguard the people's rights and privileges, *which* is the duty of every honest citizen to maintain (insert *it* after *which*).

The relative pronoun *which* is at once the subject of 'is' and the object of the transitive verb 'to maintain.' It is against the rules of Grammar.

(*h*) He has carefully avoided reference to *him* or his own achievements. The pronoun *him* refers to the same person spoken of already. Correct *him* to *himself*.

(*i*) *Whom* did you promise help? (to whom). The dative 'whom' is not used as an in-

direct object but only adverbially with the preposition *to* before it. Do not write, 'whom did you give word'; the correct form is 'to whom did you give word'.

8. *Transitive and Intransitive Verbs Confused*:

(*a*) A spirit of hostility *pervaded among* the masses (remove 'among'. The verb is transitive).

(*b*) Pupils must be instructed to guard *themselves* against such errors. The verb is both transitive and intransitive but in this sense it is intransitive. Remove 'themselves'.

(*c*) My father *grudges against* my going to the theatre (Grudges my going or grudges me permission to go). *To grudge* is a transitive verb.

(*d*) They have *accepted* to take the volumes on these terms (agreed). Accept = Agree to take. The verb *accepted* is a transitive verb. It does not take the infinitive for its object but *agree* and *consent* do. Replace *accepted* by *agreed*.

(*e*) The result will depend on how you *exert* (exert yourself). To exert is transitive and reflexive. It takes a reflexive pronoun for its object. To *exert* pressure, influence, etc., is also in ordinary use.

(*f*) My letters are reported to *have been miscarried* (to have miscarried). The

verb 'to miscarry' is intransitive. In the sense also of 'to be delivered prematurely by a pregnant woman', it is intransitive : *She has miscarried.*

(g) My landlady *delivered* a male child. The verb 'deliver' is transitive as in the sentence, 'The postman delivers letters'. But in the sense of 'to be disburdened of' the verb is used in the passive form. Correct the sentence to 'My landlady *was delivered of* a male child'.

(*h*) *My heart misgives* as I think of the many delicate and intricate tasks that await you. *To misgive* is transitive. Correct the italicised expression to 'My heart misgives me'. Words fail me; my heart fails me are examples of the verb fail used in the transitive sense. *To misgive* is always transitive. *It ill becomes to a gentleman to behave so badly* (*becomes* is transitive and remove the *to* after it).

(*i*) He will consider the fact as a crime which will be too easily *atoned* by imprisonment, and as more deserving of deportation (atoned for). *Atoned* was formerly used as a transitive verb in the sense of 'Compose'; it is at present used intransitively. Atone for = make amends for. Insert *for* in the above example after 'atoned'.

9. *Misuse of Verbs* :

(*a*) The new Government enforced the peo-

ple into submission. We *enforce* a demand, argument or action; we never use the verb with reference to a person. We force a person *to do* or *into doing*. Correct 'enforced' to 'forced'.

(*b*) I cannot *vouchsafe* the accuracy of his statement. The verb *vouchsafe* has been confused, as is often the case, with *vouch for*, which means 'to guarantee the truth or accuracy of'. The following are examples of the correct use of the verb 'vouchsafe': (1) He vouchsafed special attention to my affair. (2) He *vouchsafed* to help me in my need (=condescended).

(*c*) The Russians are now seeking to *cut off the retreat of* the enemy from the Crimia. We use the expression 'to cut off' in reference to supplies or communications but not an action. Replace the italicised expression by 'to cut off the enemy in the Crimea'.

(*d*) *I took ill* and could not attend the meeting. The expression is used in the passive form. Correct it to 'was taken ill'.

(*e*) The rough draft remains to be *faired out*. The correct expression is 'written out fair', or 'made a fair copy of'.

(*f*) Francis Thompson *preferred* to read poetry in the public library than to study Chemistry or Physiology. We might say, 'Francis Thompson preferred reading

poetry......to studying Chemistry'; or if *than* is to be retained, *rather* should precede it: 'Francis Thompson preferred to read poetry rather than study Chemistry or Physiology'.

(*g*) The teacher took care to *assure* a parent of his son's progress. The verb is transitive and requires an object. In this context, however, the verb *ensure* may also be used: to ensure to a parent his son's progress. It may replace *assure*. To have a grip *of* is idiomatic. Similarly we say a mastery *of* the subject, and not *over*.

(*h*) You must see that you *affix* the documents with your signature and stamps of the prescribed value. The correct expression is 'to affix one's signature or the stamps to'. Replace the expression by 'affix the stamps and your signature to the documents'.

(*i*) A great amount of opposition had to be *envisaged* in securing the seat, *letting* alone the expense involved. The verb *envisage* is journalese for *face*. It is a word of recent origin and the use of it is resorted to by journalists and others who aim more at display than at simplicity of expression. *To envisage* a question is familiar to newspaper readers.

To let alone is used only in the imperative and means 'not to mention'. Replace 'letting' by 'let'.

(*j*) We were present at the auction and some of us bade up to Rs. 500 for the auctioned articles. In the sense of 'to offer a price', the verb undergoes no inflexion for the past and the past participle. Replace *bade* by *bid*.

(*k*) Do you *allude* to me when you say this? (mean).

10. *Sequence of Tenses*: Shall *and* Will *Misused*:

(*a*) Will you be affected by the collapse of the bank? The auxiliary to be employed in questions of this type is determined by the answers expected. The answer to the example must be either 'shall' or 'shall not.' Hence replace *will* by *shall*.

(*b*) He declared that matters *shall only* improve by taking a bold step. The above is an example of the wrong sequence of tenses. The grammatical rule governing the sequence is that a past tense in the principal clause is generally followed by the past tense in the subordinate. The auxiliary *shall* is incorrect. Replace it by *would*. Put *only* after *improve*. Whose taking a bold step is suggested?

(*c*) This much can be said of him that he never ventured opinions of his own, unless they *are supported* by documentary evidences. The present tense in the

clause beginning with *unless* should be corrected to the past. Correct *are supported* to *were supported*. Replace 'evidences' by 'evidence'.

(*d*) Would you tell me where your father was? The sequence of tenses requires that *was* should be *is* if the inquirer wants to know the present whereabouts of the father, but if he refers to the whereabouts at a time in the past, *was* is correct.

(*e*) One would wish that things are better. *Are* should be *were;* for the speaker wished for a state of things which does not exist.

(*f*) He said to himself, 'Will I forsake my principles for a mess of pottage?' (correct).

Since the man's words are quoted and the question is within quotation marks, the sequence is not affected. If the question is converted into a statement, the sequence rule will have force : 'He asked himself if he would,' etc.

(*g*) The havoc wrought by the war led men to doubt whether God *was*.

The existence of God is a universal truth, and the use of the present tense to represent it will not be altered. Replace *was* by *is*.

(*h*) The Government intended that fee con-

cessions *will* be extended to the deserving poor.

The correct auxiliary used in subordinate clauses after *demand, intend, desire, require,* etc., is *shall* and not *will.* Sequence requires that *should* shall be used instead of *will.* Is there euphony in using *intended* and *extended* in the same sentence?

11. *Double Passive Constructions*:

(*a*) The Taj Mahal was begun to be built immediately after the death of the queen (began to be built.........).

(*b*) The responsibility of keeping the parts of the streets in front of their dwellings clean is sought to be evaded by the public (wrong). *The public seek to evade* ....is correct.

(*c*) Pupils were ordered by the Board to be punished for late attendance (correct). 'To be punished...' is an objective complement.

(*d*) The rule is intended to be applied only to a section of the people (wrong). We might say, 'to apply only to..............'.

(*e*) Thieves are threatened to be punished with imprisonment (wrong). The absurdity of the double passive construction in the above examples will be made clear by changing the voice of the verbs in them : The king began *to build* the Taj Mahal; (*b*) The public seek to *evade* the

responsibility, etc.; (*d*) The authorities intended to apply the rule.........; (*e*) The police threatened to punish thieves with imprisonment. In the above examples except (*c*), the objects of the verbs are *to build, to evade, to apply,* and *to punish.* The construction of the passive forms of the above is faulty and should be avoided. But in (*c*) 'to be punished, etc.' is an objective complement. Active: The Board ordered the pupils *to be punished* or ordered the pupils *to be punished* or ordered the headmaster to punish the pupils.

12. *Confusion of Voices*:

(*a*) My friend's wife delivered a male child (was delivered of). The verb is used only in the passive in this sense.

(b) Wayward youths *lose* all sense of shame or decency (are lost to).

(*c*) His views on the present industrial condition of the country *comprise* in his latest speech (are comprised).

(*d*) Every community *can be rest assured* of its position in any agreement arrived at by the leaders.

(*e*) He *possesses* a strong idea (is possessed with).

In the above sentences only the passive forms of the verbs are idiomatic. In example (*d*) *he* and

rest are almost synonymous; use either, but *rest* is preferable.

13. *The Case of a Noun or Pronoun Used as Complement of the Verb 'To Be'*:

(*a*) If any must leave the party, let it not be we (us).

(*b*) I know the man to be *he* whom we met the other day (him).

(*c*) It's me (a colloquialism not used in serious writing except in conversation and fiction).

(*d*) It was *him* that I referred to (he).

(*e*) *Who* do you think him to be (whom).

The grammatical rule relating to the case of the pronoun after the verb 'to be' or any other form of it is that it is the same as that of the antecedent noun or pronoun.

14. *Confusion of Tenses*:

(*a*) The man *comes* to me cursing his opponent and *threatened* to take his life. The man's actions which occurred simultaneously are represented as taking place at different times. Correct *comes* to *came*.

(*b*) While I *read*, I fell asleep (was reading). *While* is a temporal subordinate conjunction, and the clause means 'during the time that I was reading'.

(*c*) Some men lock their *stables* when the

horses *are* stolen (have been stolen). The correct expression is 'to lock the stable door'. It is only after the theft of the horses that the locking is done; correct 'are stolen' to 'have been stolen'.

(*d*) It is a few years since we *have had* the pleasure of seeing you. The conjunction *since* denotes a point of time and not a period of time. Correct *have had* to *had*. Other examples of the correct use of *since* are: I have not seen you *since I returned* from Delhi; I have been ill *since* last Monday.

(*e*) It looks as if the whole plan *will fall* through if sufficient care is *not taken*. Conditional clauses are used to introduce non-existent conditions. The tenses of the verbs in them should be past subjunctive. Correct the italicised phrases in the example to 'would fall' and 'were not taken'.

(*f*) *I have seen* him long ago (saw). The action of *seeing* being in the past, the verb should be in the past indefinite.

15. *The Wrong Use and Omission of* As *after Certain Verbs*:

(*a*) The Inspector *expressed himself* very much satisfied with the progress the school had made in so short a time (expressed himself as very much satisfied).

(*b*) The sentence is made *as* the unit of expression (remove *as*).

(*c*) Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar is *regarded* a great authority on the history of India (regarded as..........).

(*d*) Our immediate aim may be not so much *as* to teach as to test (Remove the first *as*). The sentence when rearranged will be 'Our immediate aim may be not to teach so *much as* to test. The use of the first *as* in the example is not called for.

(*e*) The Tahsildar was promoted *as* Deputy Collector (Remove *as*).

16. *Absolute Constructions*:

(*a*) The plaintiff, having failed to attend the court, he lost his case (Remove *he*).

(*b*) The Police having failed to prove the accused guilty, and *him succeeded* in proving the accusation false, the judge threw out the case (substitute *he* for *him*, and 'having succeeded' for 'succeeded').

(*c*) We expect for the presidentship the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Patanjali Sastry, *whom failing*, we intend to approach the Chief Secretary to the Government (*who failing* or *failing whom*). In the latter alternative *failing* is a preposition governing *whom*. *Who failing* is an absolute construction.

(*d*) The wind being favourable *enabled them to embark.* (Put a comma after *favourable* and replace the italicised group by 'they embarked' or 'they were able to embark').

From the above examples with corrections, it will be clear that the subjects of the absolute constructions and the main clauses are different and the absolute constructions are separated from the clauses by the comma. Absolute constructions are adverbial phrases.

17. *Misplacement of the Infinite for the Gerund and vice versa*:

(*a*) He denied *to have had* a hand in the matter (having had).

(*b*) He associated himself with Miss Butler *to write* a book on Grammar and Composition (in writing),

(*c*) Members of the Servants of India Society are forbidden *from accepting* posts in public service (to accept). But we say 'are prevented from', and 'are precluded from'.

(*d*) Education must aim *to give* a moral constitution to the child (at giving). The use of the infinitive after *aim* is American.

(*e*) The head of the office had *no intention to retain* unqualified clerks any longer (no intention of retaining). Similarly,

the word 'intention' is followed by the gerund, when it is preceded by *an*, *any*, *the*, possessive adjectives such as *his*, etc., and when it is used in the plural.

(*f*) The Headmaster meditates *to resign* his post and *enter* politics (resigning, entering).

(*g*) Mr. Vasudevan is believed *as having had* a hand in the murder (to have had).

(*h*) The proposal made *for inviting* editors of newspapers to the conference met with acceptance (to invite).

18. *Unattached Participles and Gerunds*:

(*a*) Before describing the type of oral work that may be undertaken, there is a matter *that claims our attention* (that we should attend to).

The gerund 'describing' in the sentence is not attached to the subject of the sentence. The construction of the sentence as it stands has to be altered so as to make the statement direct and clear.

Rewrite :—'Before describing .... undertaken we have to consider an important matter' or 'a matter demanding our attention'.

(*b*) The council sanctioned a new post in the educational department thus *necessitating* the appointment of an additional officer. What necessitated?

Of course, the sanction. The participle is unattached. Correct the sentence into 'The council .... department, which thus necessitated .... ' Which = and the sanction.

(*c*) In compiling the present lessons for pupils in Form II of Indian High Schools, almost every lesson has been the subject of experiment in class ('Has been made ....'). There is no indication of the agency of the act denoted by the gerund 'compiling'. It would be better to change the voice. 'In compiling .... Indian High Schools, the authors have made almost every lesson the subject of experiment in class'.

(*d*) *Considering* the age and attainments of the culprit, he was acquitted. Did the culprit consider his own age and attainments? No, *considering* is not a participle; it is a preposition; hence no noun or pronoun is needed for 'considering' to cling to. The sentence is therefore correct. But 'considering the age ...., the judge acquitted the culprit' is correct as 'considering' here is a participle.

19. *Misuse of Participles, Present and Past* :

(*a*) The Principal refused to admit the *failed candidates* (the candidates who had failed).

(*b*) We left for Bombay the previous day, *reaching* there the next morning at 5 o'clock. The participle can be used only of a simultaneous action. *Leaving* and *reaching* are not contemporaneous:

(*c*) Professorships in Government Colleges are offered only to *England-returned* graduates. *England-returned* is used in reference to non-Englishmen who have returned home after graduating at English Universities. The past-participle formation is wrong in the sense in which it is used. The use of *returned* is allowed only in the collocation 'a returned emigrant' (an emigrant who has been sent back home).

(*d*) There will be no long sentences, no *miscarried* attempts at fine writing (misdirected).

We speak of a person who has failed in his attempt as having miscarried. We also say that a pregnant woman has miscarried. A letter which has not reached the addressee is said to have miscarried. To *miscarry* is intransitive and cannot admit of a past-participle formation in the passive sense.

(*e*) the far-east question has become a *vexing* one (vexed). *Vexed*=much debated. This is the sense in which it is used. As an adjective *vexing* = annoying.

(*f*) When the street had not yet been *lighted*, the man began to search for the lost jewel with a *lit* candle. In the former case *lighted* or *lit* may be used, but in the latter the past-participle is used attributively, and *lighted* is preferred to *lit*.

(*g*) A male child was *born* by her (borne); but we may say *born* to her.

20. *The Split Infinitive*:

(*a*) The Superintendent of Police proceeded to the spot *to personally investigate* the matter (to investigate the matter personally).

(*b*) Our aim is *to so allocate* the grants as not to give room for the least complaint (so to allocate). Or 'to allocate the grants so as ....'.

(*c*) The interests of Indian trade and commerce *will seriously be* imperilled, if timely action is not taken (will be seriously imperilled). The adverb has a closer connection with the verb than with the auxiliary.

(*d*) The Allies are planning to further advance in the enemy's territory. 'To further advance' is a split infinitive. The placing of the adverb 'further' after planning would change the meaning. The infinitive is the object of the

verb 'are planning' and as such must be placed as close as possible to the governing verb. *Further* should come after 'advance'.

21. *Idiomatic Use of Adverbs and Adverb Phrases* :

(*a*) It was a *thundering* great fish that we caught. The weather was *mighty* fine. The adverbs 'thundering' and 'mighty' are colloquial and should not be used in writing.

(*b*) *On* one day he came to see me. We might say 'on a certain day', or 'one day'.

(*c*) I am *yet* in the dark as to the cause of his ruin (correct). Yet = as late as now, though I should have known it earlier. It is also used in negative contexts as in 'he has not yet come' (so far). He is not yet present = he is still absent.

(*d*) Time is *out*, and stop writing (up).

(*e*) We find both Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi *equally* anxious to reach a workable understanding (Remove *equally*).

(*f*) The book you wrote on Politics is at once *both* interesting and instructive (Remove *both*).

(*g*) The horse is used both for riding and drawing carts (and for drawing carts).

(*h*) I am too glad to hear that my rival has made a narrow escape from the danger (insert *only* between *am* and *too*).

(*i*) He has *never* promised to touch wine again (place *never* before 'to touch').

(*j*) They declared that matters *will only* improve by taking a bold step. *Will* should be replaced by *would*. The present position of *only* will suggest that matters will improve and do nothing more. The writer's idea is that it is only by taking..........................step that matters will improve. Place *only* after *improve*.

(*k*) My eldest son is a boy of about 18 years of age (correct).

A grammarian finds fault with the collocation *of about* and would remove *of*, as *about*, a preposition, would convey the sense. But if *about* is taken as an adverb qualifying the adjective *eighteen*, then, *of* governs *years*. The above construction is therefore justifiable and correct.

(*l*) Mr. Churchill does not undertake difficulties; *on the other hand* he emphasises them (on the contrary). 'On the contrary' here would mean '*far from undertaking*', etc. The clause beginning with *on the other hand* presupposes the beginning of the previous clause with 'while on the one hand'.

(*m*) I am very surprised at the progress the school has made in so short a time. The word *very* is used incorrectly for *much. Surprised* is here a past participle used in verbal sense as will be seen by changing the voice: The progress ....time, surprises me very much or much. The adverb *very*, however, is correctly used before a past participle in an adjectival sense: *he looks very surprised; a surprised look.*

22. *The Unidiomatic Use of 'There' in Sentences*:

(*a*) Whatever reasons *there* may exist for non-intervention in the war, Britain is morally bound to take up the cause of the weak in the interest of peace and humanity (remove *there*).

(*b*) The bell goes *there* (bring 'there' to the beginning). 'There goes the bell' is the correct form.

(*c*) You should not have absented yourself, whatever reasons *there* may have been (correct).

(*d*) You should not have absented yourself whatever reasons *there* may have existed (remove 'there').

(*e*) *There* may have existed several causes of his degradation (correct). Or, 'there may have been several causes of his degradation' (correct).

The use of *there* in sentences is idiomatic when the order of subject and predicate is inverted, and *there* precedes them; where *there* is no inversion, *there* is out of place. In the case of *be*, however, the use of *there* in inversions is imperative and idiomatic.

23. *Confusion in the Use of Prepositions and Conjunctions and Misuse of Prepositions* :

(*a*) If the fee or instalment of fee be not paid *within* the end of the month, the pupil's name shall be struck off the rolls (by or before). *Within* is a preposition denoting a period of time: The work will be finished *within* a week (= not beyond the end of).

(*b*) Wireless telegraphy adds to our pleasure as well as helping to educate us. *As well as* is a phrase conjunction, and not a preposition. Replace it by besides or correct *helping* to helps.

(*c*) We went *over the whole* Madras in search of our missing friends (*over the whole of*). But we can say 'over the whole city'.

(*d*) All the teachers on the staff of the High School were transferred *excepting* the Headmaster (except).

Except as a preposition is used before a noun, a pronoun, or an adverb phrase. *Excepting* with a negative before it has the force of a preposition.

(*e*) The actor is *on* the point of death (at). We are *on the point of leaving* (= above to leave).

(*f*) Much of the early work at informal grammar consists *of* acquiring terminology (in). Water consists of oxygen and hydrogen. My chief business *consists in* reconciling the parties (= lies in). *To consist of* = to be composed of. It is used with material things. To consist in = to be comprised in.

(*g*) It would be quite *below* us to notice such obscure points as you refer to. *Below us* = below our social level (beneath). *Beneath us* = beneath our dignity.

(*h*) It was in Madras *where* we met (that). It was in Madras that we met = Our meeting was in Madras. (Or) It was Madras *that* we met *in* or *where* we met.

(*i*) Appointments to high posts are made by *those men* in power (the men in power or those men who are in power).

(*j*) This is a second grade, *and* not a first grade college (but). If of two things mentioned, the one that is mentioned later includes what is mentioned before, the connective used is *but;* but if the earlier thing mentioned includes that mentioned later, we use *and.*

24. *Negative Force Cut off in Sentences* :

(*a*) I have no part *or* lot in the matter (nor). *No* being an adjective qualifing the noun *part,* its force does not extend to *lot.* Write *nor* in the place of *or;* or replace *no part or lot* by *neither part nor lot.*

(*b*) The Collector could not help *but* punishing his favourite (remove *but*). The sentence as it stands, means, The Collector could not avoid anything except punishing his favourite, *i.e.*, he could avoid punishing.

(*c*) *No judicial or any* other authority took action against the wrong doer (remove *any*). Since the indefinite numeral adjective is placed before *other,* it cuts off the negative force; its removal carries on the negative force to the latter part. 'No judicial or other authority...doer' is correct.

(*d*) I hope you will *not* mind the trouble *and* do your best. The negative participle *not,* attached to ,the auxiliary *will* and the verb, is also connected with the verb *do.* The sentence in full is 'I hope you will not mind the trouble and will not do your best'. The idea is quite contrary to the writer's. And this can be remedied by inserting *will* before *do*

or by replacing *and* by *but*. Or, 'you will mind no trouble and do your best' will pass.

25. *Appropriate Prepositions* :

(*a*) The speaker compared the parks in the city *with* the lungs of the human body. The appropriate preposition to the verb 'compare' in the sense of 'to be like' is *to* and not *with*. To compare with = to put side by side with for comparison: An educational institution in the mofussil cannot *compare with* one in a city.

(*b*) It became a proverb *of* refractoriness.

(*c*) He *confided me with* all his secrets, and reposed no confidence *on* any relation of his. To *confide* secrets *to* a person and to *entrust* a person *with* secrets are correct. We also say 'to entrust secrets to a person.' We repose confidence *in* a person.

(*d*) The supplies were not adequate *for* my requirements (to). *Adequate to* and *sufficient for* are idiomatic.

(*e*) We partook *in* the fare we had left (of). We partake *of* something; we partake *in* conversation or eating.

(*f*) His statements were not far wide *from* the truth (of).

(*g*) Rev. A. J. Bond and Mr. Kesava Menon

associated themselves *with* the tributes paid to the retiring professor (in).

The sentence may be improved by rewriting it as :—Rev.......................................themselves in paying a tribute to, or a tribute of praise to...........

(*h*) The writer was indicted *with* plagiarising the works of Morley (for). But we say, to charge a person *with* an offence or to accuse one *of*.

(*i*) Grocers and others dealing *with* stray articles of food take undue advantage of the difficulties of transport and the large demand *of* things (deal in, demand for).

(*j*) Practice has stamped these rules and regulations firmly *in* our mind. We say 'to *fix* something *in* or *on* one's mind, but always use *on* after the verb 'to stamp'.

(*k*) Gandhiji took *an* initiative *for* bettering the lot of the Adhi-Dravidas. The correct usage is 'to take *the* initiative *in*'. The indefinite article *an* is out of place as there can be only one first step, but no more. We might also say, 'took the initiative *to better*..'

(*l*) The doctor *charged* his patients *with* high rates of fee. In the sense of 'to demand high fees,' the verb 'charge' takes two objects, one direct and the other indirect. The correct form is either, (1) The doctor charged his

patients high rates of fee, or (2) the doctor charged high rates of fee *to* his patients or their accounts.

(*m*) Sir Norman Strathie's claim *of* concern for poor men's interests (to).

26. *Wrong Comparisons* :

(*a*) What are the two most important high-grade timbers produced in South India? Compare their qualities with (1) Mango wood, and (2) Deal wood. We compare a thing with another *of the same kind;* we compare one kind of tree with another kind of it. Similarly, the qualities of one kind of tree are compared with those of another kind and not with the tree itself. Insert 'those of' after 'with' in the example.

(*b*) The act will come into force sooner than it may be expected (remove *it*). The objects compared are the time of the act's coming into force and the time of expectation. The pronoun *it* in the example represents the noun *act*. Remove *it* and read 'sooner than may be expected'.

(*c*) What likelihood is there of each nation sending to the Peace Conference men of his way of thought, equally strong as Mr. Churchill and of his way of thinking. *Nation's* should replace 'nation.' *Equally strong as* is incorrect and should be re-

placed by 'equally strong with' or 'as strong as'.

(*d*) English has been made part of the school system of countries with interests as widely different as Japan, the Argentine, and Estonia. The objects of comparison are not the countries mentioned: the interests of Japan, the Argentine, and Estonia are compared. Insert 'those of' between *as* and *Japan* or rewrite 'English.............with widely different interests, such as Japan.......................'

(*e*) An examination of the merits and demerits of the book will convince one that it is a more useful production. If the sentence had ended with 'than any other in the field', it would have been correct. As the sentence stands, it is incorrect, and *most* or *very* should replace *more*.

(*f*) Krishnaswami is no less an intelligent boy than his elder brother. *No* is here an adverb meaning 'by no means', and modifying the adjective group 'less intelligent'. As an adjective *no* = *not a*. In the sentence above, the indefinite article should precede *no* or come after 'intelligent': "a no less intelligent boy' or 'no less intelligent a boy' is the correct expression.

(*g*) The expenditure has increased at a more rapid rate than the income has increased. There would have been no grammatical

trouble if the sentence had been 'The expenditure has increased more rapidly than the income'. But as it stands, the objects compared are the rates of increase in expenditure and income. The ellipsis to be supplied after *than* is *the rate at which.* Hence insert *at* after 'increased' at the end.

(*h*) Unlike his *father* the life of Aurangzeb was simple yet austere (*father's*).

(*i*) Raman is *cleverer* than industrious (more clever). We say, Raman is cleverer than Krishnan, but when two qualities in the same person are compared, we use the above form with *more* added to the positive.

(*j*) Such things are easier done than described (more easily). But the expression 'easier said than done' is colloquial and idiomatic.

27. *Parts of Speech Confused*—Adjectives Used as Nouns, and Adjectives Used as Adverbs:

(*a*) The sports competitions will be held on the 24th and 25th *instants* (a school circular). *Instant* here is an adjective and means 'of the current month'. Correct 'instants' to 'instant'. *The 24th instant* = the twenty-fourth day of the current month. As such it cannot take a plural.

(*b*) Methods bulk *more largely* than matter

in the early stages of instruction. Bulk larger; 'to bulk large' is the idiom.

(*c*) The men who espoused his cause were forsaken, and made to suffer, *lifelong*. *Lifelong* is an adjective as in 'his suffering was lifelong'. We say, he suffered *all his life* or *his lifelong*.

(*d*) The whole of the city was up in arms; the *whole London* fought tooth and nail (The whole city, the whole of London). The preposition *of* is omitted before a general name but used before a particular name.

(*e*) We spent the *lifelong* day in merriment (livelong).

(*f*) The food you served smelt strongly of onion (strong). We say, to smell good or bad or sweet.

28. *Wrong Elliptical Constructions*:

(*a*) While not being bad English, it is somewhat untidy. The sentence when filled out would read 'While it is not being bad English', and this is bad English. Replace it by 'while not bad English'.

(*b*) You gradually develop a quickness of apprehension, which is in itself a fine training for the mind, an indispensable preparation *for no matter what form of study*. The regular construction is 'no matter for what form of study'. The

sentence in full is 'you gradually ....it is no matter for what form of study it is'. The proper order of words in the example is 'no matter for what form of study'.

(*c*) It is therefore better to say that a verb is used transitive *rather than* that it is transitive or intransitive (Remove *rather*). Or rewrite: 'We might therefore say that........................intransitively rather than that..........................'

(*d*) As to how far he will succeed in his attempt it is a hard problem (remove *as to*, and *it*). As to = as relates to; it is an ellipsis. We cannot say *as to* when he will return (remove *as to*). *As to* is a phrase preposition, and the noun clause following it is the object of the transitive verb 'cannot say'. Remove *as to* in the example, and 'how..................................attempt,' is a noun clause, subject of *is*.

(*e*) The deputation was patiently listened to by the Director, and its suggestions acceded to. Insert *were* before 'acceded'. It has however become idiomatic to omit the auxiliary in spite of the changed number or person, but the construction is objected to by grammarians.

(*f*) No statesman has so far, and will, adopt such drastic measures. Insert *adopted* after *so far*. The present perfect form

of adopt requires a change of tense to 'has adopted,' and *will* requires the infinitive. Hence no justification for the ellipsis.

(*g*) The interpretation put by the new Baghavatar on the 13th verse in the 13th Chapter of Bhagavad Gita was more interesting *than could nave been* given by any other interpreter.

The objects of comparison are (1) the new Bhaghavatar's interpretation, and (2) and interpretation that could have been given by any other interpreter. *Any interpretation that* = what. Rewrite: 'The interpretation............................was more interesting than what could have been given by any other interpreter'.

(*h*) Resort to the mother-tongue is permitted to *whatever extent deemed necessary*. The whatever extent = to any extent that. The relative *that* requires a complete verb and not a participle. Insert *is* before *deemed*. The sentence, 'whatever rules *laid down* by the Rishis are dogmatic' is incorrect for 'whatever rules have been laid down............................dogmatic.' Whatever (adj.) = Any that.

29. *Wrong Syntax*:

(*a*) As soon as *he* reached Waltair, *my son* wrote to me for money (my son, he). The pronoun should follow the noun to which it relates and not precede it.

(*b*) *Having* come late, the *teacher* did not allow the pupil to enter the classroom. Who came late? Is it a vicarious punishment that the teacher underwent? The sentence is an example of the use of an unattached participle. Correct it to 'Having come late, the pupil was not allowed by the teacher to enter the class-room'.

(*c*) Let pupils make sentences such as follows:

As, being a relative pronoun, must agree with its antecedent *such* in number. *As* being plural, the verb must be plural. Correct *follows* to *follow*, or remove *such*.

(*d*) More than one man were injured (was). The collocation 'more than one' is treated as a compound of one, and consequently as a singular noun, is followed by a singular verb. Correct *were* to *was*.

(*e*) Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has been offered and accepted the Tagore Lecturership of the Calcutta University. 'Has been offered and accepted' = has been offered and has been accepted. To cut off the passive sense, insert *has* before 'accepted'. *Lectureship*, though the normal form, is unidiomatic for lectureship'.

(*f*) We are each of us liable for his losses. The grammatical rule to be observed in this instance is: if *each* stands before

the verb or some part of it or the complement, the plural number and the plural possessive are used. 'We are each of us liable for *our* losses' is the correct form. The other correct forms of the sentence that convey the same idea are (1) Each of us *is* liable for *his* losses, and (2) We are liable each for *his* losses.

(*g*) She not only had a right to speak, but to speak with authority. '*Not only* .... but' connects 'a right to speak' with 'a right to speak with authority'. The position of the phrase should be changed correspondingly. Correct: She had a right not only to speak but to speak with authority.

(*h*) The officers are there to safeguard people's rights, *which* is the duty of every honest citizen to *maintain*. The relative pronoun *which* has for its antecedent 'rights' and it must be plural; but the rights cannot constitute the duty. Insert *it* and read,—'Which it is the duty .... maintain.' Then *it* becomes the subject and *which* the object of 'to maintain'.

(*i*) (1) Either you or I has gone wrong. (2) Neither he nor you are convinced. In subject collocations like the above, grammar requires that the verb should agree in number and person with the subject immediately preceding it. It

should also be noted that of the three pronouns the second should take precedence of the third, and the third should take precedence of the first: You or he, and He or I, and the first should always come later. Furthermore, the above examples are elliptical sentences, and though any reasonable alterations in position may be made, they are best written in their expanded forms: Either you have gone wrong, or I have gone wrong. 'Neither you are convinced, nor am I'.

(*j*) *Every* man, woman, and child *were* killed. *Each* and *every* preceding a noun is singular and takes a singular verb. Each man, woman, and child was given something to eat. But *any* can be used in the singular or plural: Is there any more trouble? *Any* of these men is or are good enough. *None* has a similar use.

(*k*) The branch institution at Conjeeveram is conducted on the principles *which* the mother institution in Madras is conducted. The use of *which* as a relative adverb is irregular and objectionable in the eye of grammar. *That* should replace it. *That* = on which, and it is a relative adverb.

(*l*) What is wanted are a few articles of furniture. *What* is singular and = *that*

which. It must take a singular verb. Replace *are* by *is*. In this context *what* may also be used in the plural. What are needed are a few chairs and benches. (*What* = those which).

(*m*) I read through Mr. Satyamurthi's speeches, who passed for a first-rate speaker in Madras. The antecedent of *who* is Satyamurthi, and *who* must be placed as close as possible to its antecedent. *Rewrite* I read through the speeches of Mr. Satyamurthi, *who* passed for a first-rate speaker in Madras.

(*n*) *One* may take to the law, if *he* is so inclined; *one* may take to engineering if *his* tastes are suited. (Correct). The first *one* = a or one man. The second *one* = another. *One* is a numeral.

If *one* and *one's* are substituted for *he* and *his*, such use is objectionable. Another use of *one* is illustrated in the following examples:—

One would take to the occupation *one* likes. The use of *one* here is impersonal. The following are examples of the wrong use of the impersonal *one*:—

(1) One would not hurt *his* own fingers (one's).

(2) Naturally, *one* would look upon *one's* own geese as swans (correct). The use

of *one* in this sense, however, being modern, is not universally observed.

30. *Confused Sentence.—Structures* :

(*a*) You gradually develop a quickness of apprehension, which is in itself a fine training for the mind, an indispensable preparation *for no matter what form of study.* The regular construction is *no matter for what form of study.* The intrusion of this phrase into the middle of a grammatical structure is to be deprecated.

(*b*) Having done their best for four or more years to acquaint a number of young men and women with the benefits of higher education, they (the university authorities) then, as often as not, invite to address the Convocation at which such of those young men and young women as have successfully imbibed the lesson are expected to hear farewell words of advice, speakers who attack the training which the students have undergone. The object 'speakers' is a far cry to the governing verb. Though the late position of the object of the verb 'invite' lends emphasis to the quality or attitude of the speakers, the unreasonably long separation of the object is indefensible from the point of view of grammar. The splitting-up of the sentence into convenient parts without losing sight of the emphasis intended is recommended.

(*c*) I do not *keep him dark* about these secrets (keep him in the dark). We do not say 'to keep one dark about a secret', but 'to keep one in the dark about it' or 'to keep it dark from him'. Correct *dark* to 'in the dark'.

(*d*) There is no use talking of things of which we have no detailed knowledge. 'There is no use *in* talking, etc.,' or it is of no use talking............is the correct form. 'It is no use talking', however is a colloquialism and should not be used in writing. 'It is no good talking', is also current.

(*e*) That is *what all* one can be expected to do (all that one ....or what at best one can do). The 'what all' construction is perhaps based on the analogy of 'we all went home' where *all* is an adjective qualifying the pronoun *we*. *What* in the above example is a relative pronoun, and = that which.

(*f*) The suggestions he offered are not *worth while* taking. The adjective *worth* is followed by two objects, *while* and *taking* —which is impossible. The construction may be improved by rewriting the sentence in any of the following ways:—

(1) It is not worth while to take the ....offered.

(2) It is not worth while taking..............

(3) The suggestions he offered are not *worth taking* or *worthy of being taken.*

(*g*) If the raids are planned to put the German people in a chastened mood and therefore more receptive of Allied appeals, it is doubtless also realised that such a policy is a gamble, though a worth-while gamble in a war of this kind.

'To put a people receptive' is a wrong collocation for 'to make a people receptive'; or replace 'and therefore more receptive' by 'so as to be more receptive', or write 'and are therefore more ....'. 'A worth-while gamble' is slang and should be avoided. Replace 'worth-while' by 'repaying' or 'successful'.

(*h*) Try as best as you can to avert the trouble. *As best as* is a bad collocation for 'as best you can', the second *as* being out of place. Improve the construction by rewriting 'do your best' or 'do as best you can'.

(*i*) The Natal Administration will no doubt *claim that* their action against him was within law. The word *claim* is no doubt used in the sense of 'maintain' or 'assert'. This usage is American and is contrary to English idiom. The only sense in which the verb *claim* can take a noun clause after it is 'to demand as one's due'. (1) I *claim* that I should be

promoted in consideration of my longer service; (2) I *claim* that I have rendered honest and efficient service as an executive officer (= demand recognition of the fact that).

The verb *claim* in the sense of *assert* is in current use, however, among journalists and others ignorant of the idiom.

(*j*) As in the native states of Travancore and Mysore, the advanced of elementary education in this province cannot be considered satisfactory.

The position of the elliptical clause of the beginning of the sentence suggests the unsatisfactoriness of the advance of elementary education in the native states also. The writer's idea presumably is that the advance in the native states is satisfactory. Rewrite the sentence placing 'as in .... Mysore' at the end, i.e., 'as satisfactory as in the states of Travancore and Mysore'.

(*k*) *What with* his own exertions and the support of his well-to-do friends, he was able to built up a business. Idiom requires a repetition of the phrase *what with* after *and*. Rewrite: *What with* .... exertions, and *what with* the support .... business.

(*l*) The method and arrangement of the work is exactly that which a long experience convinces me to be best adapted to meet the wants of those who are

learning at school to clothe their thoughts in English.

The construction is very confusing. There is no grammatical connection between the relative *which* and any other word in the sentence. The Gordian knot can be cut by making 'a long experience convinces me', parenthetical and replacing 'to be best adapted' by 'is best adapted'. *To meet* may be replaced by the preposition *to* simply (adapted to the wants). Also insert a comma after *which* and another after *me* .... 'that which, a long experience convinces me, is best adapted .... English'.

(*m*) How many people came are not known. The subject of *are not known* is not people but the clause 'how .... known'. Correct *are* to *is*.

31. *Words and Phrases Misused* :

(*a*) The Hindu custom of cremating the dead has been existing *from time out of mind*. The correct expression is *time out of mind* or *from time immemorial*. Remove 'from', retaining 'time out of mind.'

(*b*) My son is *fairly to succeed* in the S.S.L.C. Examination (bids fair to succeed). We say, your performance is *fairly* satisfactory, but *fairly* (= in a fair way) is not the meaning intended here. 'My son *bids fair* to succeed ....' is the expression required.

(*c*) There is sufficient *place* for thirty more people in the hall (room).

(*d*) *Whoever* told you so? *Whatever* are you doing? Some grammarians call these pronouns Compound Interrogative Pronouns. They are separate words and should be written separately (who ever; what ever). Ever = on earth.

(*e*) The Collector would not tolerate the *very* presence of the petitioner. Replace *very* by *mere or even the*.

(*f*) The sentence is made *as* the unit of expression. We say, he *was made* king; *to make one a collector*. The words *unit*, and *collector* are complements of *make*. Remove *as*.

(*g*) All kinds of *fanciful* goods were sold in the bazaar. We say, *fancy goods*. *Fancy* = ornamental; *fanciful* = unreal.

(*h*) The sovereign is sold at Rs. 56 *and odd*. (Remove *and*). *And odd* is a bad collocation, for the word *odd* is an adjective meaning 'with something of a lower denomination'. 60 thousand odd = 60 thousand with some extra hundreds, tens and units. 60 *odd* thousand=an amount between 60 and 70 thousand.

(*i*) The officer flogged his servant, *nay*, abused him outright. *nay* = more than that. Rewrite: The officer abused his servant outright, *nay*, flogged him.

(*j*) The book is sold *at all publishing* or *bookselling firms.*

The noun 'firm' does not mean 'a shop'; it means 'partners carrying on business'. Replace *at* by *by*.

(*k*) The *venu* of the crime is not known. *Venue* (not venu), is the correct spelling. *Venue* = place of meeting. Replace it by 'scene' in the above example.

(*l*) Actors were once regarded as men of questionable *morality* (morals). The word *morality* is used especially of good habits and is not restricted in sense of sexual habits. Replace it by *morals.*

(*m*) In any scheme of educational advancement of women, it is needless to mention that sufficient encouragement should be given to women officers and teachers *by way of* increasing their pay and improving their status. *By way of* = as a method of, with the intention of.

We say, we offer prizes to deserving pupils *by way of* encouraging them, and this is one way of promoting their zeal for study. Increased pay and improved status are ways of giving sufficient encouragement to women officers and teachers. Hence rewrite: 'it is needless to mention that the pay of women officers and teachers should be increased and their status raised *by way of* giving them sufficient encouragement.'

32. *Wrong Question forms and Answers*:

(*a*) *What kind of a face had it*, I wondered. The italicised part of the sentence is a direct question beginning with the interrogative *what*. Since the clause is a sub-ordinate noun clause, object of *wondered* and subordinate to the main clause, the order of the words should be changed. We say *a kind of thing* and not 'a kind of *a thing*'. Remove *a* and rewrite: 'What kind of face it had, I wondered.'

(*b*) The Governor was heard asking the Civil Supplies Commissioner, 'you hope to double it (half a gundu) shortly, isn't it? *Isn't it?* is in wrong form. Replace it by 'don't you?' (= don't you hope ....it?) *He is a good man isn't he?* is a correct form of question.

(*c*) Who is here so vile *that* will not serve his country? The word *that* is a conjunction and not a relative pronoun. The clause introduced by it is adverbial and denotes consequence. Insert *he* after *that*.

(*d*) A clerk asks his master, Must I write to him? The master replies, 'you must not.' The answer is contrary to the natural and usual form, 'you need not'. 'Must the form be like this?' Ans.— 'Yes, it must be like this,' or 'it need not be like that'.

Need I remind him of his dues?—Ans. 'Yes, you

must remind him.........dues' or, 'No, you need not remind him'.

33. *Superfluity of Words and Phrases*:

(*a*) There is need of more adequate knowledge of the foreign tongue than suffices *in the case of* the English boy learning French or German.

Suffice is a transitive verb and as such may take 'boy' as its object. The phrase 'in the case of', then, is needless.

(*b*) The annual examinations come off on next Wednesday (Remove *on*). We may say, 'next Wednesday', 'on Wednesday next'.

(*c*) Never mind, mother, I will go and fetch them *the first things* in the morning. *First thing* is an adverb phrase and = before anything else is done. Remove *the* and make *things* singular. It is a colloquialism. 'The first thing' is also in use.

(*d*) Macaulay called his rivals *by* names (Remove *by*). To call one names = to abuse him.

(*e*) I think *it fit* to go and settle the matter with him (Remove it). We say idiomatically, 'to think fit to do something'; 'to see fit' is also used in this sense.

(*f*) He is a man of vast resources; he can rise *equal* to the occasion (Remove

equal). This error is often come across in newspapers and conversations even among educated Indians. It is an Indianism.

(*g*) It is indeed a remarkable fact to point out that such instances are rare. The construction is perplexing. Whether 'that such..........' is the object of 'to point out' or the real subject of the sentence is not made out. The remarkable fact is that such instances are rare, and there is nothing remarkable about pointing out (Remove 'to point out').

(*h*) He was restored to *his normal* health. When a person who has been ill for some time becomes all right, he is said *to be restored to health. His* and *normal* are nothing short of superfluous.

(*i*) We met him on the *same* day of his arrival (Remove *same*). *The day of arrival* is sufficiently specified and 'same' is out of place.

(*j*) Dr. Rajagopalan has been practising medicine for the last *one* year. We say correctly 'for the last year' in the same sense, though we say 'for the last two, three..............years'. (Remove *one*).

34. *The jumbling up of Restrictive and Co-ordinate Clauses in Sentences*:

A *co-ordinate* clause is of the same rank gram-

matically as the main or principal clause. A *subordinate* clause is one that is subordinate to the main clause. There are three kinds of subordinate clauses which do duty respectively for a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. Clauses are *restrictive* and *co-ordinate*, and are connected by *that* or *which*, etc., and co-ordinate clauses are introduced by the Relative *who* or *which* or conjunctions such as *for, but* and the like. It must be noted that in a sentence a restrictive and a co-ordinate clause should not be jumbled up. The following are axamples of faulty constructions with corrections or suggestions for their improvement:—

(*a*) The one thing, unfortunately which the publishers have not done, and which is regrettable, is that they have not provided Mr. Yeand with a set of these ten volumes.

The construction is confused and confusing. What is the antecedent of the second *which*? (the thing or the publishers' omission to do?) Probably the latter, and even if the former, the latter clause is not *subordinate* but *co-ordinate;* not being attached to the same antecedent with the former. A dash and the omission of *and* will put the matter right. Further, what is unfortunate?—the publishers' omission or failure to provide? *Rewrite*: 'The one thing which unfortunately the publishers..........'

(*b*) The school from which I come, *and which* is one of the biggest institutions in the city was founded by a distin-

guished body of patriots. The first *which* clause is defining, and the second non-defining. Hence rewrite: The school from which I come—*and it* or *which* is one of the biggest.............................. patriots.

(*c*) He is a sincere friend who can be relied on for help in times of need *and who* will spare no pains to do what he can for you (correct).

The two clauses beginning with *who* and *and who* are subordinate adjective ones, both of them defining or restrictive.

(*d*) I believe you know these two men of whom I have already spoken to you, and who in my opinion may assist you in your official duties (correct).

The two clauses beginning with *of whom* and who are non-defining and have the same antecedent.

If *these* were to be replaced by *the*, then the first clause will be defining, and the second non-defining; in this case, remove *and* or write *and they*.

(*e*) It is men of his class who can be trusted to undertake a work of this kind and *who* can bring *it* off successfully. The clauses are both defining or restrictive. Replace *who* by *that* in both instances or remove the second *who*, substituting *that* in the former.

Chapter V

LAPSES IN IDIOM

The reader has already been introduced to the term *idiom* and told that an idiom is an expression characteristic of English language, and has to be learnt by a foreigner by constant study and practice. The order of words in an idiomatic collocation should not be disturbed, nor should the words undergo any change of form. For instance, we should not say, 'to pick up a quarrel' for 'to pick a quarrel', the former of which still persists in Indian English. Several examples of wrong idiom are given in Chapter II, and most of them are of daily occurrence in conversation or writing even among educated Indians. The following examples of violation of idiom will illustrate the different kinds of errors that one is ordinarily liable to commit:—

1. This view never *held ground* in Europe where the governments were playing a more positive and negative role. *To gain ground* is the established idiom. We say 'a man holds his ground' when he maintains his view, or his view holds the field when it is not superseded.

2. The Headmaster was *given free hand* in the management of the school, and of his position as such *he took every opportunity*. 'To give one *a* free hand' is the idiom. The Headmaster *took*

every advantage of his position to advance the interests of the institution.

3. *In the eye of* the educated people, the progress of elementary education is not as it should be—(from *Essays by a civilian*). *In the eye of*= from the point of view of. The writer means 'in the judgment of'. Hence replace it by 'in the eyes of' (= in the judgment of).

4. All our young men have *no eyes for* beauty, or accomplishment in a poor girl. We say, 'to have an eye to or for *beauty*'. Similarly we say *we have an ear for music;* he has a *hand for pepper water* and so on. Replace 'have eyes for' by 'have an eye to'. *To* is preferable to *for*, as it denotes the main object of young men.

5. You should always attempt one plan at a time; if you attempted more, you would fall *within* two stools (between). 'To fall between two stools' = to fail through adopting more than one plan or course at a time.

6. The activities of the school at sports and games, coupled with its results at public examinations *speak highly of* its efficient management (speak well *for*). To speak well or highly of = To speak favourably or in praise of. The idea of the speaker is that the facts serve as strong proofs of, and this is expressed by the phrase 'to speak well for', or 'to speak volumes for'.

7. On the question of early marriage he and I do not *see with the same eyes*. The idiom is 'to see eye to eye with another' (= to agree).

8. I shall *thank you to favour me* with a specimen of your newly published book. The phrase is a vulgarism. It is used by one to express one's resentment. A speaker who is vexed with his noisy audience tells them 'I will thank you to be quiet'.

9. Youngsters *laugh with scorn* at the ways of their elders (laugh to scorn, or laugh at).

10. His plan has *fallen*, and he is a ruined man (fallen through, fallen to the ground). To fall through = to fail.

11. The judge *passed the judgment in favour* of the defendant (gave the judgment for). We say, a critic passes remarks or judgment on a book.

12. Start the business, and I promise you to *do the needful* (what is needful). 'To do the needful' is slang and *the needful* means the money, etc., required. The phrase 'to find the needful' may pass, but does not seem to be in use. The phrase 'to do the needful' should be avoided in writing.

13. The Government made an attempt to *white-wash the doings of* the officials involved in the lathi charge (to white-wash: remove 'the doings of'). The infinitive 'to white-wash' is used in reference to persons and not their doings. To white-wash = to attempt to clear of blame. We white-wash persons and not their acts.

14. The rider came to within a few yards of our house and *pulled* (pulled up).

15. The man is working systematically *like a clock* (like clock-work).

16. The men caught in the theft were *given over to the police* (given in charge or handed over to the police).

17. Sympathetic and liberal-minded gentlemen have *given their bit* towards the relief of the dumb and the blind. We say, *to give one's mite* or *to do one's bit*. Substitute either of these in the example.

18. Judging from the past events, the victory of the Allies is an *infallible* conclusion. 'A foregone conclusion' is the established usage.

19. Ambitious young men wish to know about their *future life* (future). Future life = the life to come = the life after death. Young men wish to know about their *future* and not about their future life.

20. Please wait; I shall come *now. Now* = at the present time. Replace it by 'presently'. *Presently* = before long.

21. The meeting was held at *public house*. Meetings are not held at public houses; they are held only in *public places* or *buildings*. 'Public houses' are places licensed to sell liquors.

22. We are bound to *reap the consequences* of our actions. This is largely an Indianism arising out of confusion. We reap or gather in harvests or fruits from fields we have sown or from trees we have planted. We may say metaphorically, 'to reap the fruits of our own actions'. We *take, bear* and *endure* or *suffer* the consequences of our actions.

23. The bus strike in the city which continued for five days is now *at the end of its tether.* 'To be at the end of one's tether = to be at the end of one's resources'; which is not the idea of the writer. Replace it by 'at an end'.

24. It is understood that the Duke of Kent contemplates *to stay* in Canada for about six weeks. —Correct 'to stay' to 'staying'.

25. No considerations of equity or international law are likely to stand *in the way of Japan from staking* its resources on an Indian military expedition if its leaders favour aggression. Correct 'to stand .... of' to 'deter Japan from ....' or replace 'Japan from' by 'Japan's staking ....'

26. My son is *doing his fifth year.* Many Indians are heard to use it in the sense of 'in his fifth year'. The usage is not correct. We say the prisoner *has done five years* and is discharged (slang). Correct the expression in the above example to 'in his fifth year' or 'has just gone four'. Expressions like the one in the example, being slang, are best avoided in writing.

27. *One of these fine days* my son went to the Collector and presented a petition for assignment of some dry land. The expression 'one of these fine days' or 'one of these days' means 'some day in the near future' or 'before long'. Correct 'one of these fine days' to 'one day' or 'recently'.

28. Things are dead cheap. The correct idiom is 'dog-cheap' or 'dirt-cheap.'

29. On hearing the loud burst of a bomb, the people *trembled* in their shoes. The correct expression is 'to shake in one's shoes'. Replace 'trembled' by 'shook'.

30. We do not know how far these allegations are *well-founded*. One might want to know if the allegations have a good or strong foundation, and he might satisfy himself that they are well founded. Remove *well* from the collocation, or replace *how far* by *whether* or *if*.

31. We were *before-hand* the enemy and met their air attacks with success. *Before-hand* is an adverb and not a preposition, and the idiom required is 'to be before-hand with'. Insert *with* before 'the enemy'.

32. In our religious views we are *asunder as the poles*. The idiomatic expression is 'poles asunder' or 'whole worlds asunder'.

33. In any attempt at reconstruction of an Indian village, each educated *leisurely* gentleman must *give* his *shoulder*. Leisurely = not hurried; leisured = having leisure. The latter word is wanted. Further, 'to give one's shoulder' is incorrect for 'to put one's shoulder to the wheel'. Rewrite the above sentence: In any .... village, each *leisured* gentleman must *put his shoulder to the wheel*.

34. To make assurance *doubly* sure, he had all kinds of safeguards provided in the sale document. The idiomatic expression is 'to make assurance double sure', though grammar requires the adverb form.

35. Gokhale was one of India's great political *assets.* The word in the plural means properties of an insolved debtor. In the singular it is loosely used in the sense of 'any valuable possession' or 'a mental or intellectual gift'. His gift of oratory was a great asset to him. *Assets* in the example may be replaced by 'leaders'.

36. I think he spoke *in bona fide* (*bona fide*). *Bona fide* itself is an adverbial phrase meaning 'in good faith'. *Bona fides* is a noun phrase meaning 'good faith'. I doubt his bona fides (= his sincerity). 'Fides' is a noun meaning 'faith'.

37. We should *get superior* to petty jealousies and temptations (rise superior to, rise above). 'To get superior to' is unidiomatic.

38. It is better to *nip a bad practice* in a boy than to allow it to grow into a habit. Insert 'in the bud' after 'boy', the idiom being 'to nip something in the bud.'

38. Many of the Indian politicians who clamour for self-government will not be satisfied with *half-way* measures, but will want the whole hog. We say 'a half-way house' but 'half measures.' Persons who will fight to the end for self-government are said *to go the whole hog.*

40. Those students who struck despite the advice of their professors had *to bow to the rod.* We *bow to* a person in authority or power. The writer means that the students who struck had to receive chastisement with submission. The expression that

conveys the idea is 'to kiss the rod.' Replace 'had to bow to the rod' by 'had to kiss the rod.'

41. The views of the old orthodox members of the community *keep the field*. The correct expression is 'to hold the field' (= prevail).

42. 'Teasing' is *a printer's devil* for 'teaching.' The phrase 'a printer's devil' is misused in the sense of 'a misprint'. 'A printer's devil' means 'an errand-boy in a printing office.'

43. There was *pin-drop silence* in the lecture hall. The phrase 'pindrop silence' is not much in vogue. The expression in common use is 'you might have heard a pin-fall.' Leigh Hunt, however, used the expression 'pin-drop silence' in his *Rime*.

44. The stranger entered the room in my absence and *knocked off* all my things. The phrase 'to knock off' is not used in the sense of 'to carry away.' We say, the workmen *knocked off* or *knocked off work*, or the poet *knocked off verses*. Replace 'knocked off' in the example by 'carried away' or 'made off with.'

45. He has gone to the hills to recoup his health (to recruit his health). The correct expression is 'to recruit health' or 'to regain lost health.' We also use 'to recruit' intransitively in the same sense.

46. In June, 1940, just five years ago, the fate of democracy *hung in the balance* (Correct). The expression 'to tremble in the balance' (= to have

reached a crisis) may also be used. *In the balance* =undecided.

47. Mussolini must be trembling in his top-boots, if the Germans have left him a pair. We say, one '*shakes in his shoes or boots*' or 'has his heart in his boots', and not 'trembles in his shoes or boots.' We say, a person *trembles,* or *shakes in his shoes.* We also say *to be all of a shake or tremble.*

48. Men are apt *to pick up holes* in the pockets of those whom they do not like. The correct expression is 'to pick holes in another's pocket.'

49. The present sentence would be unintelligible, if it were so printed as to force the reader to pause *between* each word. It is not clear whether the reader has to pause at *each word* or between *each two words.* We say, between two things and not between one thing. Replace 'between' by 'at.'

50. In filling high posts in public service the Government should look out for local *talents* before importing men from outside India. In this sense *talent* has no plural. Talent=persons of ability. Talent = powers.

51. He is now *quite alright.* Things are *quite exactly* the same as I saw. The collocation *quite alright* is vulgar and ungrammatical. *Alright* should be written as two words *all* and *right. All* is an adverb modifying the adjective *right.* Quite all right = all all right, which is redundant. Say, *quite right* or *all right.* Again *quite exactly* too is redundant; say, *exactly,* omitting *quite.*

52. Such books are *available,* in the local book-

shop (sold). We could say, 'such books............ in the Connemora Library or the University Library.' There are several books of reference *available*. Available = that can be used or utilised; it is not used in the sense of *sold*.

53. My wife is *carrying* and I find it inconvenient to leave the place. The participle *carrying* is not used in this sense, and we generally use 'in the family way' or 'with child'. Likewise, the wrong expression, *out of doors* is used of a woman who is *menstruating* or *unwell*, or *has her menses or monthly turns*.

54. Govindan *ekes out* his livelihood by running a small business. 'To eke out' is used in the sense of 'to supplement'. Govindan earns his livelihood by keeping a small shop; and his income being insufficient; *he ekes out* his living by private tuition (=supplements, adds to).

55. The party went round the city *making visits* to their friends. 'To make a visit' is a Scotticism, and the idiom in use is 'to pay a visit'.

56. The president called for a meeting of the members (called). We call meetings. The present system of education *calls for* reform. We *call in* a doctor or a policeman.

57. The *individual* that came this morning appears to be an applicant for the vacancy (man). The word in the example in this sense is a vulgarism.

58. The teacher asked the boy *to go on standing*. The boy appeals to the teacher for permission

to sit down. The teacher says, 'No, go on standing.' *Keep* or *remain* is correct. 'To keep' refers to a repeated or continued action. The boy *keeps* talking: the man *kept* moving about.

59. It was not surprising that she (Mrs. Subbarayan) should sponsor measures for the *alleviation* of these who were suffering social and legal disabilities. We *alleviate* sufferings and *relieve* sufferers. Replace *alleviation* by 'relief'.

60. Many people felt that generosity and fair treatment had failed and hence the next thing was to be merciless and not allow them to come again *among the comity of nations* (into companionship with other nations). The comity of nations does not mean an international organisation or body of nations. It means 'courtesy which one nation shows to another.'

61. Our days *are numbered*, and we must try to do within the allotted span what we are capable of. When we say of a man that his days or years are numbered, we mean that he is to die soon. The writer means that our life is short, and this idea is not conveyed by the expression.

62. We are not great friends; I have only a *talking* acquaintance with him. The word 'talking' in this sense is unidiomatic. We say, 'a speaking acquaintance' and 'on speaking terms'.

63. The *whirligig* of fortune make the poor rich and the little great. The metaphorical expression in use are 'the whirligig of time' and 'the wheel of fortune.' Replace 'whirligig' by 'wheel.'

64. The reason why he does not do this is, as a rule, *because* he fails to hear the difference. This might be written correctly, 'He does not do this, as a rule, *because*..........' or 'The reason ....rule, *that* he fails..........'. Replace *because* by that.

65. It was ten years *ago since* the paper was stopped. Here is a confusion in the use of *since* and *ago*. Say either (1) It was ten years ago that the paper was stopped. Or (2) It is ten years since the paper was stopped.

66. The question remains, however, as to whether the steps that are proposed to be taken are sufficient for purposes of liquidating illiteracy.

The noun clause introduced by *whether* is in apposition to the subject 'question.' Hence remove 'as to.'

'The steps that are proposed to be taken' is a double passive construction, which should be avoided. Rewrite: 'The steps that the Government propose to take..........' or 'that it is proposed to take.'

67. If convinced, would you consider it wrong to burn your boats and *place* your whole faith in that scheme, daring though it be? We *place belief* or *confidence in* something, but *Pin faith to* or *on it*.

68. The clerk, who *is a family man*, has requested his master to consider his claim to promotion with sympathy. *A family man* has no meaning; and 'a man of family' means 'man of good birth.

The clerk perhaps wants to say that he has a big family to support.

69. This young man *carries an old head over young shoulders*. The idiom in use is 'to have an old head on young shoulders' (= to be wise though young). Rewrite the sentence correcting 'carries .... shoulders' to 'has .... on young shoulders.'

70. That remarkable professor of *Grecian* history, Professor F. E. Corley, spoke in highly musical accents and in his inimitable style. We say 'Grecian nose', 'Grecian architecture'; but 'Greek history' is the correct expression.

71. The post-graduate course that was being inaugurated would be of permanent benefit not only to the medical profession but to the *general public at large* (Remove either *general* or *at large*). The collocation 'the general public at large' is redundant. Say, 'the public at large' or 'the general public' or 'the people in general.'

72. The man is *plunged head and ears* in debt. The correct idiomatic expression is 'immersed in debt' or over head and ears in debt.' 'To plunge into debt' is slang.

73. The farmer's sons are not thrifty; they live from hand to mouth. 'To live from hand to mouth' means to spend *what* one earns without laying by something for the future. The sentence is correct.

74. We could not *see the wood in the tree*; the

details were too many for us to see the points (see the wood for the trees).

The correct expression is 'not to see the wood for the trees,' i.e., 'to be unable to see, or to miss the point on account of too many details'. Replace *in* by *for* and make *tree* plural.

75. Do not give the dog a bad name and hang *it*. The correct expression is "do not give a dog a bad name and hang *him*.'

76. In the early stages of teaching English, the teacher uses objects, pictures of objects, direct action, gestures, and such like to make his lesson impressive. Such like is a vulgar expression and should be replaced by 'things of the kind', or 'the like.'

77. My brother's *family* has been admitted into the hospital for confinement. Half-educated or ill-educated Indians misuse *family* in the sense of *wife*. This is an Indianism. *Family* means parents, children, etc.

78. Your argument is weak; it will *wash* (won't wash). To wash (fig.) = to stand examination. The correct expression is 'it *won't wash* (=it will not bear examination).

79. Some members of the extreme wing of the congress party went about fanning public discontent. The metaphorical expression is 'to fan the flame of public discontent', or 'to foment public discontent' may be substituted.

80. The chief aim of the Ramakrishna Mission

is to *put tone into* the character of the pupils in its charge (to give tone to).

81. Some of us *labour from the* wrong impression that the trustees of temples have complete control over the temple funds (labour under = are under).

82. The directors of the co-operative bank do not seem to *pull on well* (to pull well together; to work harmoniously).

83. I can make no head or tail of what he said (cannot make head or tail of). The negative force in *no* is arrested by the conjunction *or* and is not carried further. The correct expression is 'not to make head or tail of.'

84. Do not *halloo when you are yet in the wood*. This is a paraphrase of the idiomatic saying, 'Don't halloo till you are out of the wood.' The expression means that you should not assume too soon that your difficulties are over.

85. The new man appointed to the office is not quite efficient; it is thought he will *set the Thames on fire* (will not set the Thames on fire). The phrase 'To set the Thames on fire' means 'to be very clever'. Correct 'will set' to 'will not set.'

The word *Thames* is confused with the name of the river Thames. People naturally understood the expression to mean 'to do an impossible deed.' The origin of the expression is as follows :—

Before the introduction of machinery into flour mills, a process was adopted for sifting flour. The

temse, which became corrupted into Thames, was a sieve, moved with a rim projecting from the bottom. The fellow who worked the sieve made the rim hot enough for sifting the flour and this was a test to judge of a man's capacity, and he was indeed a clever fellow who would produce friction by hard work and it was said that a weak and incapable man would never set the Thames on fire. The expression which was originally understood in the sense of 'to do an impossible deed' probably owing to confusion of *temse* with *Thames*, the name of English river, found its way into India, and some northern newspapers coined their own phrases, such as 'to set the Ganges on fire' and so on. New editions of books containing phrases and their origin brought the real fact to light.

86. The Government grant was only Rs. 25,000 instead of a moiety of the deficit. The word *moiety* in the sense of 'half' has a legal application. It is also used loosely and vaguely elsewhere. The word may be replaced by 'a half.'

87. Things are not *all together* as they seem. *Altogether* is one word meaning 'on the whole.'

88. It was proved that he was the real culprit; *all the same* he was punished. *All the same* = in spite of this. *All the same* should be replaced by 'consequently.' The sentence would have been correct if it had run, 'It was not proved ....; all the same he was punished.'

89. *In the palmy days of his career* as Premier, Walpole carried out many reforms with

a view to improving the resources of the country (at the zenith of his power). We say, in the *heyday* of one's life but we may say in the palmy days of England under able ministers.

90. Germany *holds forth* fresh assurances to Turkey. The idiom is 'to hold out hopes, assurances or promises.' Replace 'forth' by *out*.

91. I will write *you* next week (write to). The verb does not take an indirect object alone. We may say correctly, 'I will write to you' or 'I will write you a letter.'

92. His interest in their Dharma Sastras had had prompted him to study the subject *intensely*.

An intensive study means a kind or form of study directed solely or exclusively to a subject or certain essential aspects of it. We speak of intensive and extensive cultivation. We say 'his interest in the subject was *intense*, not *intensive*'. A farmer cultivates his lands intensively when he directs his energies and attention to a few selected lands and applies effective methods so as to produce more than formerly. Replace 'intensely' in the example by 'intensively.'

93. The briefer 'thanks' is a little too brusque for everyday use; it is better *to reserve* that reply, if it is to be used at all, *to* thanking one for some small act of kindness, etc. To *reserve for* a purpose or to restrict to some purpose or act is the idiom. Replace 'reserve' by 'restrict.'

94. His arguments *inspired* his audience with conviction. We say, we inspire confidence, hope

or courage into a person, or inspire him with such sentiments. The above usage is contrary to idiom. The correct expression is 'to carry conviction.' Rewrite: His arguments carried conviction into the minds of his audience.

95. Is there any *earthly* use in placing such costly machinery in charge of infant institutions? The idiom is 'what on earth is the use of placing, etc.?' We also say, 'it is no earthly use' (= it is of no use at all). 'Institutions in charge of machinery' or 'machinery in the charge of institutions.'

96. Pupils *must wish their* masters whenever they meet them. We say, 'to wish one good morning, or good evening, etc.'. or 'to greet one.' Replace *wish* by *greet* or *salute*.

97. Appointments to high posts in public service are made by those men in power. We say 'the men in power' or 'those (men) who are in power' or 'those in power.' The expression 'those men in power' is not sanctioned by usage.

98. 'Thanks very much' is a vulgar expression current even among educated Indians. Grammatically it is indefensible. 'Thank you very much' or 'Many thanks' is correct.

99. Send your reply by *return post* (return of post).

100. The schools in South India send astonishingly large numbers of pupils for the S.S.L.C. exam. Their *number is legion*. The idiom is 'their name is legion.' Pronounce legion (le'jn).

101. You may do this *taking your own time.* *All your leisure* is the correct idiomatic expression. The phrase in the example is against correct usage though grammatically unexceptionable. The expression 'To take one's time' to do a thing is however current.

102. The new officer *followed the wake* of his predecessor in office. The idiom is 'to follow in the wake of' or 'to follow the example of.'

103. It serves *very little* purpose to discuss the matter at this stage (serves no purpose; is to very little purpose).

Chapter VI

CHOICE OF WORDS

The reader was introduced in a previous chapter to a set of slang, colloquial and idiomatic expressions, and warned against the use of slang and colloquial words in serious composition.

He will now be introduced to a set of synonyms which are almost identical in meaning, and in the use of which great discrimination has to be exercised. Taking for example the pair *fault* and *defect*, we have to know precisely when to use the one in preference to the other. While a *fault* is positively wrong, a *defect* implies the absence of an important thing. We *answer* a question put for the sake of eliciting information, but *reply* to a charge or an argument. The accused cannot be reinstated in office unless he is *purged* from suspicion (purged or cleared of). An army is said to *gain* victory as the result of valiant fighting and to win one as the result of chance. We *help* a man in need, danger or difficulties, but *assist* him in the performance of some work physical or mental. The *entire* house as it is, is not sufficient and with some additions to it, the accommodation will be *complete*. A *fortunate* man obtains what he wishes and hopes to gain; a *lucky* man gets what he may desire but not expect to gain. Men are *examples* of virtue or vice but their actions are *instances*. *Examples* are used for purposes of instruction and

instances for the sake of illustration. *Causes* are natural; *reasons* are logical. One who restrains or controls his desires is *contented* and one whose desires are fulfilled is *satisfied*. A bright morning is *likely* to turn out a bright or fine day, but its turning out foggy is *probable*. Some people never have more than *sufficient*. One will never have *enough* unless all his desires are satisfied. We do a thing *instantly* when we attend to it without loss of time, and we do it *immediately* after finishing what we have on hand. The fact that the whole is greater than its part is *obvious* to all; it is *evident* that extravagance leads to ruin. We *alter* our dress when we make it different in some respects, and *change* it when we remove it and put on another. A man is *praised* for his general conduct and *applauded* for a particular act. What is *essential* is indispensable; what is *necessary* is that which must exist as cause or effect. What is *requisite* is that which is required for an end. An index to a book is *requisite;* it is neither *necessary* nor *essential. Of course* evil comes of evil; but *certainly* the results of the final examination will decide a pupil's eligibility for promotion to a higher class. We *compare* two similar persons or things *to* each other; we *compare* one person or one thing *with* another when we want to point out their similarities and dissimilarities. We compare Asoka *to* Akbar, but compare Akbar *with* Aurangzib. We say, a *luxurious* life, or a *luxurious* people, but *luxuriant* crops or a *luxuriant* imagination. A proposal or offer meets with ready *acceptance;* a word has a different *acceptation* (interpretation). We say, we have *plenty* of coal, but have *ample* accommodation. But when

we say we have *ample* coal, we mean a plentiful supply of coal. We should say 'there is plenty of butter' but not 'butter is ample.' *Ample* is used in the abstract sense, and *plenty* in the concrete sense. We say, his behaviour is *gentlemanly*, but not *gentlemanlike*, unless the good behaviour is pretended.

Of practices that exist at present we say *existing* practices; but when we mean that they existed formerly and still continue, we say they are *extant*. *Lighted* and *lit* are the past and past participle forms of the verb *light*. Formerly *lit* was the only past tense form, and either *lighted* or *lit* was used for the past participle: he lit the candle; and the candle is lighted or lit. But now *lit* or *lighted* is used for the past tense. We say he used the *lighted* (not *lit*) candle and he *lit* or *lighted* the candle. A *masterful* stroke is wrong for a *masterly* stroke. One's look is *masterful*.

The adjectives *golden*, *silvery*, *brazen*, *silken*, *leathern*, are used rather in a metaphorical sense; a *golden* rule but a *gold* ring; *silvery* hair but a *silver* box; a *silk* garment but *silken* ties; a *leather* case but *leathern* jaws; a *brass* handle but *brazen* impudence.

We say, water is *defective* when it is impure, and *deficient* when its supply is insufficient. *Deficient* comes from *deficit*, and *defective* from *defect*. We say, the *poetical* works of Lord Tennyson, but he wrote in a *poetic* vein. In 'the beginning of a lesson must always be *purposive*', *purposive* is a bad form of, and should be replaced by "*purpose-*

ful." We say *Greek* history but a *Grecian* nose or style of architecture. *Grecian* is a disyllable and should be pronounced Gre'shn. We *acquiesce* in a proposal when we do not object to it; *agree* or *accede* to it, when we accept it or consent to it. In the choice of words or phrases one should not aim at showing off or making a display of one's knowledge. A few examples are given below in illustration: to *negotiate* a difficulty, *terminological inexactitudes* (lies), *femoral habiliments* (breeches), *equitation* (riding), *in the neighbourhood* or *vicinity of* (about), *parlous* (embarrassing), *erstwhile* (formerly), *to enthuse* (to show enthusiasm). Most of them are the pet expressions of the journalist. To them may be added the following other pet expressions of the journalist:—

Flabbergast, mutual friend, dynamic personality, personal equation, the psychological moment, intransigent, hobnobbing, fissiparous, to queer the pitch for, pal, bunkum, party or individual for man, dumbfounded, obstreperous, cantankerous camouflage, to envisage, to explore (= to examine), to the fore, the comity of nations, proposition, nationals, and so on.

One could say straight out and intelligibly 'he will make no progress' instead of 'he will get no forrader;' 'a self-imposed work' instead of 'a work of supererogation;' 'in plenty' for 'galore;' 'concerning' for 'anent.'

Readers of newspapers, particularly Indian, are familiar with the following which have become their food and drink:—

Asset, intensive, mentality, unthinkable, feasible

idiosyncrasies, meticulous, protagonist, slogan, venue, happenings, to intrigue, the acid test, gesture, far-flung, and so on.

A publisher who had just brought out some publications for school use was asked if they had been approved, and the publisher's reply was, 'They are disapproved books.' He should have said 'unapproved books' for the books had not yet been submitted for the approval of the Text-book Committee.

One must be very careful in choosing the right words that convey (one's) meaning. Having chosen them, he must arrange them in logical order without losing sight of the principles of rhetoric or style: clearness, euphony, absence of ambiguity, and emphasis. And of these principles, it must be noted that the most outstanding is *clarity*, for the main object of self-expression is intelligibility. The other principles of style come later in order of merit or usefulness.

CHAPTER VII

PRONUNCIATION

It is almost a truism that no two persons pronounce alike. There should however be a common standard of pronunciation towards which all speakers of English, native or alien, should strive. The best style of pronunciation, be it noted, is the careful conversational style. And whatever differences may exist in pronunciation, the standard that is adopted by the majority of good speakers is the most acceptable.

First of all, we have to bear in mind that the modern tendency in English, especially in native words, is to lay the accent on the first syllable. In words of classical origin, however, identical in form, but differing in use and meaning, it is usual to accent the first syllable when they are used as nouns or abjectives, and the second syllable when they are used as verbs. Examples:—a'ccent (n), acce'nt (v); ab'sent (adj), abse'nt (v); sub'ject (n and adj), subj'ect (v); trans'fer (n), transfe'r (v); pro'gress (n), progre'ss (v); and so on. *Comment*, is accented on the first syllable both as noun and verb.

Formerly the verb *advertise*, which is of French origin, was stressed on the last syllable to denote its origin. But as it became anglicized it began to be accented on the first syllable like other

words ending in *ise* or *ize*: exercise, compromise, recognize, patronize, visualize, organize, synchronize.

No hard and fast rule can be laid down for guidance in pronunciation, but the following instructions, it is hoped, will be of use to those who wish to avoid errors in pronunciation: a word ending in *ic* has its accent on the syllable immediately preceding it: sys'tem but systema'tic; te'lescope but telescop'ic; emblem but emblema'tic; eco'nomy but econom'ic; cha'racter but characteri'stic; philo'sophy but philoso'phic, but poli'te, po'litic, poli'tical.

The incidence of the accent in the same word very often changes its meaning; in'valid and invali'd; pre'mise and premi'se; conju're and co'njure; au'gust and augu'st.

Another persistent error in pronunciation which is current among Indian students of English is to pronounce *geous, tious, cious* as though they were disyllabic; courageous, religious, outrageous should be pronounced kura'jus, reli'jus, outra'jus. Geous = jus; tious and cious = shus.

Another important rule of pronunciation is that words of three or more syllables ending in *ous* are accented on the third syllable from the end: miscella'neous, invi'dious, volup'tuous, e'nvious, promi'scuous, and so on. When however, the *ous* is preceded by *ti, ge, gi,* with *j* or *sh* sound, it coalesces with this, and the accent is shifted to the second syllable from the end: viva'cious, egre'gious, adventi'tious, coura'geous, avari'cious.

The same rule applies also to words ending in *al or ar*. The third syllable from them is accented except when they are preceded by *ti, ci,* which coalesce with *all;* parti'cular, mun'cipal, tri'vial, si'ngular, but pala'tial, benefi'cial. When the *al* is preceded by *ent* or *ont*, the accent falls on the syllable immediately preceding it: pare'ntal, accide'ntal, transcende'ntal, horizo'ntal.

We shall now proceed to examine words ending in *ate*, such as *e'ducate, se'parate, de'monstrate, legi'timate, ingra'tiate.* From the position of the accent in these words, the inference may be safely drawn that disyllabic words ending in *ate* (transla'te) are generally accented on the second syllable, words of three syllables ending in *ate* are accented on the first syllable, and those of four syllables ending in *ate* have the accent on the second. The rule may be made clearer by the following additional examples: de'falcate, insi'nuate, co'nsummate, nego'tiate, fe'derate, exte'nuate, comme'nsurate, preci'pitate, vi'olate, mu'tilate and so on.

The word *pear* is heard mispronounced by some to rhyme with *dear.* It should be pronounced so as to rhyme with wear, bear, tear (rend). The word *tear,* (drop from the eye) rhymes with *rear, near, year,* and *dear.*

The aspirate *h* is not sounded in *honest, honour, hour, heir.* Nor is it sounded in the following:—exhaust, exhort forehead, blockhead, hothouse, annihilate, nihilism, vehicle. The *h* in *hotel* and *honorarium* may be sounded or not; we may say a honorarium or a hotel as well as an *honorarium* or an *hotel.*

In pronouncing the words fortnight, midwifery, coxswain, housewife, half-penny, two-pence, three-pence, our attention needs to be paid to the important principle that in stressing a particular syllable of a word or a particular part of a compound word, we usually slur over the rest of it: midwifery (midifri), waistcoat (weskut), housewife (husif) when it means a case for needles, etc., medicine (me'dsn), venison (ve'nzn) forecastle (foksl), forebode (forbo'd), gunwale (gunl). Heaven and seven are pronounced respectively *he'vn* and *se'vn*. Half-penny and three-pence are pronounced *hāp'ni* and *thre'pens*. Cupboard is pronounced *kub'erd*. Sovereign is pronounced *so'vrin*.

The vowel *O* in one, which was once long as in *alone* and *atone*, has shortened and is pronounced *wu* (one, wun). Won and one are pronounced alike. The sound of a short vowel lengthens when the syllables after it coalesce: cannot (can't, ka'hnt), shall not (shan't, shahnt), will not (wón't, do not (dōn't). Words ending in *ent* or *ant* are generally accented on the third syllable from the end: inci'pient, vi'rulent, a'ffluent, magni'ficent, reca'lcitrant, reci'pient. In the pronunciation of the following words the sound of an additional g is heard:—linger (lingger), finger (fingger), singular (singgular), mingle (minggle). The additional g sound, however is not heard in the following:—hanger, singing, ringer, stringy. From these examples the following rule may be deduced:—When *ng* occurs in the middle of a word, it takes a g sound in addition to its own, but when it comes at the end, it does not take additional g sound, even if a suffix is added.

It may be noted that the sounds of *b* and *r* are not heard in the following:—climb, dumb, limb, thumb, liver, virtue, firm, normal, lord, arm, sharp, and so on.

It will interest all lovers of correct pronunciation to investigate the different sounds of *x* in the following:—

e'xecute (v); x (ks)	exhi'bit (gz)
exe'cutive (adj.); x (gz)	exi'st (gz)
e'xercise (ks)	exci'te (ks)
expa'nd (ks), e'xile (ks),	exhibi'tion (gz),

exha'ust (gz), e'xit (ks).

x in the above words is sounded *ks* (1) when it is followed by other consonants, (2) when the accented syllable ends in *x*, and when the stress comes later, *x* is sounded as *gz*.

The long vowel in *room* shortens as the result of the word's combining with others such as *bath* and *bed*: ba'throom and be'droom. The vowel *oo* in them becomes short *oo*. The vowels in saith (seth), said (sed), says (sez), ate (et), read (past = red), are short. Many Indian pupils and elders too mispronounce *fōōd* as *food* to rhyme with *good*. The vowel sound in tooth, fool, roof, moon, is long while it is short in good, hood, hook, look, took, foot, rook, brook and book. The words enve'lop and deve'lop are accented on the second syllable whereas the noun envelop (e'nvelop or ónvelop) is accented on the first. The latter *t* is not sounded in often, soften, listen, postman, most people, mustn't, epistle, nestle, castle, wrestle, christmas. From the above examples the rule may be deduced that *t* is

not sounded when it comes in the middle of a group of consonants or when it comes before sonant *l* followed by a silent vowel.

The digraph *ch* is pronounced *tsh* as in chat, chin when it occurs in words of Anglo-Saxon origin which have long been current in English. *Ch* is sounded *sh* in words recently borrowed from French—*chauffeur* (sho'fer), *chaise* (sh), *chagrin* (sh), *moustache* (sh), *attache* (sh.) *Ch* is sounded as K in words of Greek origin: character, christ, choir, christmas, chronicle, chemistry, cholera.

The words assuage, persuade and dissuade are disyllables. They should be pronounced perswā'd and diswā'd. Morale is pronounced morah'l and not *moral; finale* should be pronounced *finahle*.

We shall now examine the sound of a voiceless consonant placed between two vowels: brea*th*e (dh), rise (z), clo*th*ing (dh), far*th*ing (dh), tea*s*e (z), choo*s*e (z), tee*th*e (dh), wi*s*e (z). *Th* before *er* an sonant *m* is sounded *dh*: them, hither, there, fathom, bother, rhy*thm* (dh). *Th* is voiceless when it ends a word or is preceded by the sonant *l*: health, wealth, filth, wreath, sheath. It should be noted however that the addition of the plural suffix to nouns ending in *th* after a long vowel, makes it voiced:—tru*th*s (dh), you*th*s (dh), pa*th*s (dh), shea*th*s (dh), wi*th* may be pronounced with (th) or wi*th* (dh).

Tion occurring as part of a word is always pronounced *shen*. *Sion* is pronounced *shen*, or *zhen*.

Sion is pronounced *shen* in the following: permission, mansion, mission, procession. It is pronounced as *zhn* in the following: adhe*s*ion (zh), preci*s*ion (zh), deci*s*ion (zh), profu*s*ion (zh), vi*sion* (zhen), fu*sion*, inci*sion* (zhen). *Tion* is pronounced *chn* in question and suggestion, but 'questionnaire' is pronounced 'keschenār'. The word *awry* in 'things have gone awry' is mispronounced so as to rhyme with q*ua*rry, and it should be pronounced to rhyme with *ally*. The word 'remini'scence' should be pronounced not as 'reminisèns' but as 'reminis*e*ns', Edinburgh should be pronounced 'Edinbur*e*' and ribald should be pronounced 'ribld'. The mark–below *e* denotes weakening of the vowel sound. We shall proceed to examine the different sounds of the long vowels and diphthongs:—

- ei (ā) : heinous, heir, neighbour, veil.
- ei (i) : height, either, eider.
- ei (ē) : seize, ceil, weird, but *heifer* is pronounced *hefer*.
- ie (ĕ, ĕ) : friend (e), siege, mien, tier, but *sieve* should be pronounced siv, to rhyme with *live*.
- ea (ĕ) : meadow, leapt, lead (metal), meant, read (past). Bu*t beat*, the past tense form of *beat* should not be pronounced bet, but bét.
- eo : pe*o*ple (ĕ), l*eo*pard (ĕ), y*eo*man (ō).
- ou : c*ou*gh (kawf) b*ou*gh (bow), d*ou*gh

(o), en*ou*gh (enuf), c*ou*pon (kōōpn), t*ou*gh (tuf), l*ou*d (lowd).

ui : bisc*ui*t (kit), circ*ui*t (kit), cond*ui*t (dit), fr*ui*t (ōō) s*ui*t (sūt).

Gh is sounded as follows:—enough (f), heugh (k), nought (silent); *G* is silent in poignant, reign, benign. *L* is silent in calf (kahf), talk (tawk), salve (sahf), folk (ō). The final *t* in trait is silent (tra) as in *fait*.

Ow (o): row, know, bow (n), sow, sew (so), bow (v) and row (quarrel) are sounded so as to rhyme with *cow*.

Care must be taken to pronounce correctly the following words in the pronunciation of which some difficulty is felt particularly by Indian pupils:—

Beau (bō), bureau (būrō), bury (beri), busy (bizi), clerk (klahrk), pretty (priti), quay (kē) sergeant (sarjnt). Words ending in *le* or *ile* are generally accented on the first syllable, and the sound of the vowel immediately succeeding them shortens or remains intact.

Ex:— agile (a'jil), docile (do'sil or do'si'l), missile (mi'sil), senile (sēnil) virile (vi'rile or vi'ril), sterile (ste'ril, or ste'ri'l) facile (fū'sil), futile (fūtil) or (fu'til) and the like. The first syllable in each of the above words is accented and the *i* in the second is long or short.

The correct pronunciation of English words can be acquired either by an intimate contact with

educated Englishmen or by constant reference to a Standard Pronouncing Dictionary. We would however recommend our readers to use the Phonetic Dictionary by Daniel Jones or the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. If one finds it hard to master the symbols employed by Dr. Jones, it is hoped he will have no difficulty in learning the diacritical signs of the Oxford Dictionary. The reader will find below the symbols of both the systems arranged side by side:—

Words	*Phonetic symbols.*	*Diacritical signs*
Father	fa : dho	fahdh*e*
Mother	M M △	mūdher
Ask	a : sk	ahsk
Task	ta : sk	tahsk
Man	Mŭen	Mān
Boy	boi	boi
Educate	e'djukeit	e'dukāt
Reign	rein	rān
Relation	r*e*l*e*i'jnn	relash*e*n
Piece or Peace	piú : s	pés
Please	pli : z	ple'z
Pleasure	plezo	plezhe
Measure	mezo	Mezhe
Cloth	kl o *0*	klōth
Clothes	klouz *Or* kloz	kloz *Or* klōdhz
Basket	ba : skit	báhsk*et*
Próduce (n)	pródju : s	pródús
Often	I : fn *Or*	Ofn
Each	e : tf	éch
Every	e'wri	èvri

Pence when combined with numbers from 2 to 11 and 20 is not stressed, but is stressed after the rest: five pence, ele'ven pence, twenty pence, but sixteen pence, twenty-one pence, twelve pe'nce. These words are written separately. Indian students have a tendency to pronounce words beginning with *a, e, i,* with a *y* sound for instance *ate, ape,* are pronounced like yat, yape; egg, edible are mispronounced yeg and yedible; ink and India like yink and yindia. This tendency should be nipped in the bud, and the correct pronunciation impressed on the pupils at the beginning of their career at school. It should be noted that the rules formulated in this chapter are of general and not universal application; they may, however, be used as something of a guide to correct pronunciation.

Indian students are apt to utter the past and past participle tense forms of verbs like *hiss, talk, whip, ask* with a voiced sound; *asked* should be pronounced as *askt, whipped* as whipt, *hissed* as hist, *laughed* as lahft, *walked* as wawkt. The participle adjectives *mixed, fixed,* and *marked* are pronounced mi'ks*e*d and fiks*e*d when used attributively and mixt and fixt when used predicatively. *Marked* is pronounced markt as in 'a marked man.' Many however say fixt price, and mixt company. *Used* as a verb in the past tense, is pronounced *uzd*, but as an adjective in the sense of 'accustomed' or as a verb meaning *was* or *were* accustomed is pronounced *ust*.

CHAPTER VIII

INDIAN ENGLISH AND INDIANISMS

There are certain expressions current even among educated Indians, that are not sanctioned by correct usage. Many examples might be given of such and it is proposed to deal in this chapter only with some that are familiar and current.

It will thus be seen that this chapter is restricted to a treatment of unidiomatic expressions current even among educated Indians, for which there is neither grammatical nor idiomatic sanction. Some of them have been already dealt with in previous chapters under different heads, and it is thought desirable that they should have a separate treatment.

'Reverend Smith and Sir Ramaswami' are illiteracies for 'Reverend Henry Smith and Sir C. P. Ramaswami.' If the christian name in Reverend Henry Smith is not known, Mr. may be inserted : Reverend Mr. Smith.

'His wife is carrying six months' is an Indianism for the idiomatic 'his wife is six months gone with child.' *Carrying* is an Indianism for 'in the family way' or 'with child.' When Indian friends part, they are heard to say, 'I shall take leave'; this expression is not sanctioned by usage; it is an Indianism pure and simple. The correct expression is 'farewell,' 'goodbye,' 'I must be going.' 'To neck one out' is an Indianism which should be avoided. 'To take ill'

is incorrect for 'to be taken ill'; An Englishman would say 'to pay a visit' in preference to the Scotticism 'to make a visit'. Never use 'the same' to do duty for the pronoun *it*, as in 'I received your letter yesterday, and *the same* was duly acknowledged (it.).'

When we speak of a man's habit of using a cap, we say, he wears a cap; when he uses it occasionally, he puts on one. The verb 'to thank' in—'I shall thank you to help me' is incorrect as the expression denotes the feeling of anger or vexation on the part of the speaker. 'I shall thank you not to interfere in my affair' is correct. 'I wonder how did you get it' is grammatically incorrect as the subordinate clause is in question form and not in the form of a statement or an indirect question. Similarly, 'how far do you think have you travelled?' is a double interrogation and the correct form is 'How far do you think you have travelled?' The expression 'to fix up' in 'I am fixed up in the office' is an Americanism and a colloquialism. 'To fix up a meeting or an exhibition' will pass muster. We might say 'how are you?' or 'how do you do?' but not 'how are you doing?'

To most Indian students the fact of *instant* in 'the 15th instant' being an adjective is not known. Hence we find the erroneous expression 'the 15th and 16th instants.' An indirect object after the verb *write* is grammatically objectionable, but a direct and an indirect object may follow it: I will write you the result of my interview.

Again, we often hear the faulty expressions 'on

talking terms' and 'a talking acquaintance,' where *speaking* should replace 'talking.' Indian students of English have a tendency to use 'to pick up a quarrel.' A publisher *pushes* his publications or the sale of them, and we should not say 'to push on.' We may say, an army pushes on or forward. 'We *needs* must go' is the correct usage, but not 'We must *needs* go' unless the going is foolishly persisted in. The verb 'to interview' is transitive and it is a grammatical blunder to say, 'I interviewed with the collector.' The expression 'a failed candidate' is so common and persistent that no objection seems to have been raised so far against its use. 'A rejected candidate' would be a correct substitute, and 'a plucked candidate' is also in vogue. 'A man of family' in the sense of 'a man with a big or long family to support' is erroneous, and it properly means 'a well-born man.' 'To be well off in a subject' is unidiomatic for 'to be well up in a subject.' The expression 'within the 15th' is incorrect for 'before or by the 15th.'

There is a difference of opinion regarding the use of *at about* as in 'I shall come back at about 5 minutes after 10.' Some object to the collocation on the ground that *about* being a preposition governing the noun minutes, the preposition *at* is a superfluity, while others hold that *about* being an adverb qualifying the adjective *five*, the preposition *at* is needed. We may use either with impunity. 'To jump on to a wall' is a colloquialism for 'to jump on.' 'To pull on with one's colleagues in office' is incorrect for 'to pull with one's colleagues.' 'We do not pull together' = We do not work harmoniously.

There is no expression which is so much petted by Indians as 'to do the needful.' It means 'to do what is needful or requisite.' The word 'asset' is a favourite among Indian politicians and journalists. Mr. Satyamurthy was a great *asset* to India (one of whom India may well be proud). The expression 'to keep up to a promise' is an Indianism and should be corrected to 'to keep to'. Though the verbs *require* and *need* are synonymous, the former takes a noun clause after it and the latter does not. 'The law requires us to do it' or 'that we should do it.' 'It needs to be done' or 'we need to do it.' 'I tell you one thing' is an awkward Indianism for 'I tell you what' (=I will tell you what it is). 'To pave one's way for' is a confused idiom for 'to pave the way for.' We say 'circumstances paved the way for his greatness.' The verb 'to grudge' is transitive and must have an object as in 'I grudge helping you' and not 'against helping you.' We say, the boy is up to mischief and it is up to young men to carry on the work of their elders. 'It is no use to do so or doing so' is colloquial and should not be used in writing, and 'there is no use in doing so' and 'it is of no use to do so' are grammatically correct. Mr. Fowler, however, supports the usage. The use of the word 'uselss' in the sense of 'physically unfit' is erroneous as in 'he is useless for work.' We say of a clock that it is *irrepairable* and that a loss is *irreparable*. A person who is penniless says 'I am out of cash' and not 'out of pocket'. We say 'I am a *thousand rupees out of pocket* in this transaction' (= have lost a thousand rupees).

The expression *whether or no* is at present more

in usage than *whether or not*. Formerly the expression *whether or no* was restricted in use in sentences like the following:—'It is doubted whether or no he is a fool.' 'It is doubted whether or not he will return.'

In the former example *no* is an adjective qualifying 'fool.' It is doubted whether he is a fool or *no* fool. In the other example *not* is an adverb modifying the verb 'return.' Such a distinction is at present made light of, and *no* after *whether* has gained ground. *No* is treated as an adverb. In 'we need not attach too much importance to the presence of a large number of landlords'; Remove *too* which is superfluous. But of 'we cannot attach too much importance.................................lands,' the meaning is different and the verb *too* is needed. The meaning of the sentence is 'whatever, however much importance may be attached to the presence will not be too great.' The sentence 'I do not have a taste for Mathematics' is faulty, 'I have no taste.............................. (no=not a). The collocation 'I would like' is wrong as the sense of liking is conveyed by *would; I should like* is better and more polite. The world *mentality* is as much petted by the journalist as the expression 'at the psychological moment' (= at the critical hour). The collocation *rather unique* is objectionable as there can be no limit to things being unique (The situation was *unique*). To *laugh in ones sleeve* but not sleeves is idiomatic. The expression 'quite all right' which is on the lips of almost every educated Indian is incorrect, for *quite right* or *all right*, for quite=all and *all*=quite. The spelling *alright* is incorrect, and the words *all* and

right should be written separately. The collocations 'quite exactly' and 'almost exactly' are erroneous and incompatible. The past participle in 'The river has overflown its banks' is incorrect for 'overflowed' and *overflown* is a compound of *over* and the participle of *fly*. The expressions 'to be from Madras' and 'to be for Bombay' are more elegant than 'I have come from Madras' and 'I am going to Bombay.' 'To have got' in the sense of 'to possess' is colloquial for the idiomatic 'to have.' *I have got* 2 copies of the book (have). 'Writing paper is as. 12 a quire' is more widely used than 'writing paper costs as. 12 a quire.' 'There is no love lost between us' is idiomatic for 'we dislike or hate each other.' We do not say 'I am 5 minutes after the fair' for the correct 'I am a day after the fair,' and this idiom should not be ignored whatever may be the duration of the late coming. The phrase conjunction *in case* should not be followed by *that*: I need not go *in case that* he comes (in case = provided or if).

The verbs *like* and *want* do not take a noun clause after them. The sentences, 'I should like that you should go,' 'I want that you should go' are wrong. The correct forms are 'I should like you to go,' and 'I want you to go.' We *accent* a word or syllable, but *accentuate* communal or religious differences. The expression 'to present one something' is incorrect for 'to present one with something.' We say correctly 'to prefix a title to a name' and not 'to prefix a name with a title.' 'Mr. Day was appointed *as* Governor of Madras,' is wrong; remove *as*. Similarly, 'The Collector was promoted *as* Secretary' is incorrect for 'The Collector was promoted Secre-

tary.' The sentence, 'They parted as friends' is faulty and the correct form is 'they parted friends' (= they were friends at parting). We say 'to forgo profits' (=to go without) and 'to forego one's profits' is wrong. We *extenuate* a person's offence, and do not extenuate an offender. We extend patronage or a favour to a person, and the expression 'to extend welcome to' is of doubtful accuracy and an Americanism. We say correctly 'we bid one welcome or accord welcome to him.' 'To be tired of a thing' denotes mental exhaustion or disgust, whereas 'to be tired with' is physical. I am tired *with* walking; I am tired *of* reading. The use of unattached participles should be avoided in 'Religion taught on this basis should inspire no faith, and being a subject of little practical value, such respect as was given to it in school days would disappear in later life.' Insert *it* before *being* to make the construction absolute. Do not say 'my brother lives in the upstairs.' The word 'upstairs' is an adverb. We say correctly, 'an upstair room.' In 'he lived lonely upstairs,' *lonely* is misused for *alone; lonely* is an adjective: a *lonely* traveller. Again, Indian students misuse the word 'studio' in the sense of 'study.' 'My brother is in his study' (room used for literary work or transaction of business), while the word 'studio' is used in the sense of 'the working-room of a painter or photographer. Many Indian students of English use the verb 'to pose' transitively as in 'He posed himself for a photo'; 'he posed himself as a scientist,' where the usage is unidiomatic. Say, he posed for a photo; he posed as a scientist. 'To pose' is used transitively in the sense of 'to propound' or 'to

puzzle a person with': He posed a problem; he was *posed* with a problem (a short form of the verb 'oppose'). The word 'reputed' is often misused. He is *'reputed to be'* the best doctor (regarded as); Ramaswami *is the reputed author* of the songs 'passes as; may not be the real author). It is absurd to use 'natives' in the sense of 'Indians or the people of India.' The natives of England are Englishmen: the natives of Africa are the Africans: English idiom is used more appropriately by *natives* than by a foreigner (natives = Englishmen). Mister (Mr.) is never used alone except as a prefix to a name. The sentence, 'please come with me, mister', is incorrect; we should say, 'please come with me, Mr. John or Mr. Ramaswami.' It is an Indianism.

The habit of inserting a full stop after Mr. may be given up on the ground that in abbreviations of words where the initial and the final letter occur, the full stop is not needed; but in such of them where the initial and an intermediate letter occur, the full stop is needed: Gen. MacArthur, but Wm Miller; a doz. copies of Irving's *Sketch Book.* Feb., the abbreviation for February must have a period at the end under the rule. But this rule is not universally followed, and the old usage mostly continues. *Latest* and *last*: My latest contribution to the *Educational Review* deals with the several aspects of the English language. That, however, will not be the *last*, for it is intended to *deal* at greater length with the subject. *Natural* in a *natural* son or brother means illegitimate, as opposed to legitimate. We say, one is equal *to facing*

and not 'to face' such difficult problems. The wrong phrase 'to rise equal to the occasion' is found current even among educated Indians. The word 'equal' is out of place, and the correct expression is 'to rise to the occasion' or 'to be equal to the occasion.' Another wrong expression that is current among Indian students is 'to follow the footsteps of' for the correct 'to follow *in* the footsteps or wake of.' Another wrong expression in vogue among Indian students is 'to bulk largely' for 'to bulk large'; cf. 'to come *handy*,' 'to hang *heavy*' (of time). We say, he was paid high, but not highly. But *highly paid* is correct. The phrase '*to hold* in derision' is incorrect for 'to hold up to derision'; but we say, he was held *in* contempt. The passenger called out to the bus driver *to hold on*. The use of the expression 'to hold on' in the infinitive is unidiomatic; it is used only in the imperative: hold on. 'The *leavings* of animals will serve as effective manure for lands,' so writes a revenue officer. Perhaps he meant 'to droppings' of animals (=dung). 'To stretch one's legs' means 'to take a walking exercise' and not 'to lie down.' Your handwriting is *eligible*: the word is confused with legible: We speak of 'a legible handwriting' and 'an eligible candidate.' It is customary among some Hindu communities to perform *the nuptials on the* third day of the marriage: 'to consummate the marriage' on the third day is idiomatic. We do not *order for books*, but *order them*. Nor do we say 'by return post' for 'return of post.'

Many educated Indians say and write 'I am *at fault*,' where they ought to have used *in fault*. *At*

fault = puzzled; *in fault* = worthy of blame. The word 'born' in 'she has not born children' is incorrect for 'borne,' but we say 'a child was born to her.' In 'My brother bore my son company in his voyage to England,' the expression 'to bear or keep one company' is idiomatic, and 'to give one one's company' is also in use. 'Kamban is comparable *with* Shakespeare in profundity of imagination, wealth of imagery and the art of expression': *With* should be replaced by *to*, which is idiomatic after 'comparable.'

Indians are liable to err in the use of the word *word*: A word came that my friend was ill. Remove *a* and *say*, 'word came..............'; he sent me a word of his illness (sent me word). We say, to kick down the ladder, but not, to kick off the ladder. We say, he availed himself of three months' leave, but it is incorrect to say 'three months' leave remaining to his credit was availed of.' The difference in meaning and use of impracticable and *unpractical* is not understood; we say correctly *unpractical* measures or men in reference to things or men when they are not in keeping with practice. *Impracticable* means 'that cannot be practised or managed.' 'Impractical' is journalese for 'unpractical'. It is a matter of L, s, d (elesde') = It is not difficult to do if we find money for it. The expression is an abbreviation of *librae*, *solidi*, *denarii* (= pounds, shillings, pence). We *inscribe* words *on* stone or stone *with* words. The students are *in many cases* below the mark: *In many cases* is sometimes used as a periphrasis and is unidiomatic. Rewrite the sentence: 'Many of the stu-

dents are below the mark.' He did the sum wrongly (wrong), but the sum was *wrongly* done. The word 'precious' in 'There is precious little grammar to learn' is an adverb and means 'uncommonly': he took precious great interest in phonetics. The usage is colloquial. The word *pretty*, too, is used colloquially as an adverb in the sense of 'tolerably.' 'Your performance is *pretty* good (= fairly)'; It is *pretty* much the same (nearly).' The reason why these idiomatic expressions are introduced in this chapter is that their usage should be mastered by every Indian student of English. It pained me *like anything* (= to an extreme or a very great degree) is more forcible than 'it pained me very much' and 'like anything' is a colloquialism. 'My brother is *likely* to leave Calcutta tonight' is correct, but 'he will likely leave Calcutta tonight' is incorrect, for the adverb *likely* must be preceded by *most* or *very*. In the former example *likely* is an adjective.

The word *like* is never used as a conjunction; 'do *like* I do' is incorrect for 'do *as* I do.' He walks *like* a lord; *like* is an adverb modifying the verb 'walks.' He walks like a lord = he walks *as* a lord does. The noun *lord* is the object of the preposition *to* understood after *like*. Indian students are found to use the infinitive after *object* and *objection*: I object *to go* is incorrect for 'I object to going.' I have no *objection to go* is incorrect for I have no objection *to going*. This point requires to be stressed on the pupils' minds as ninety per cent of them are ignorant of the correct usage. The Collector passed *stricture against* the delay in the

despatch of papers (strictures on or upon). The noun 'stricture' is used in the plural. All my friends and *acquaintance* were present on the occasion of my daughter's marriage. The noun 'acquaintance' is not used in the plural sense at present though it was formerly idiomatic; say 'acquaintances.'

Some educated Indians are heard to say, My son is quiet *at home*. This is an Indianism misused in the sense of 'unemployed,' 'at a loose end.' The word 'entertained' in 'The clerk was entertained in the office on the 25th instant,' is misused for 'appointed.' We *entertain* a guest, an audience with some kind of amusement, or an object or idea or a proposal. We however might say, the new officer entertains S.S.L.C. candidates in his office in preference to graduates in arts. The word seems to be official slang current among Indian officials. His Excellency the Governor next visited the feminine ward of the General Hospital. Replace 'feminine' by 'female' or 'women's.' We say 'female companion,' 'female sex,' etc., but 'feminine qualities, voice, tenderness, etc.' (= characteristic of or peculiar to women). Such words as sceneries, furnitures, air-crafts, etc., have no plural forms and convey a plural sense themselves. We say 'his *finances* are bad,' but not *finance*. *Under* 18 *or below* 18: 'This boy is below 18' was once in frequent use, but now 'under' is fast taking its place. The water is *below* the bridge (= some distance from it down the stream). 'Under the bridge' means 'with the bridge over head.' 'To speak under one's breath,' 'to groan under tyranny' are

idiomatic. The phrase, 'under 100' is now taking the place of 'below 100.' We say, he is *beneath* contempt and this word will not lend itself to replacement by *below* or *under*. We say, the boy is *below* the mark and not *under* the mark, though *under* 50 per cent will pass muster. Books by Indian and European writers are found to have the adverb phrase *vice versa* wrongly hyphened, and it is up to Indian students to take a note of it. Municipalities have ration shops as Madras *does*. The substitute verb *do*, cannot function for the verb 'have' as it does for other verbs; replace *does* by *has*.

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